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Editor: R. Palme Dutt

★

The Press Jungle

R. W. BRIGINSHAW, General Secretary of the National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants, looks at the near-monopoly in this 'Phoney Estate'

N.A.T.O. Prevents Peace

Getting free of this, with its Polaris and other bases, is amongst the most urgent Problems of Trade Unionism in the Sixties, writes **GEORGE SCOTT,** who led the Electrical Trade Union delegates at Scarborough

POLARIS & CONSENT
Gordon Schaffer

NOTES OF THE MONTH
on Economic Storm Clouds:
Trade Unions and Politics.

WHO BLOCKS DISARMAMENT ?
Quaestor

GOLD SCARES
John Eaton

DECEMBER · 1960

One Shilling and Sixpence

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OLD AND FAITHFUL

WHAT A TRANSFORMED scene this December from a year ago, when Gaitskell and his fellow Right Rebels began their open campaign against the very idea of a Labour Party with Socialist principles and programme. At the time we noted how much 'patient explanation and fighting for Socialist ideas' had to be done; and in that, as a reader writes: 'L.M. has played a good part'. Whilst preparing the Subjects Index in this issue I was struck by how apt and useful were the articles classified there under 'Labour and Trade Union Movement'. Especially those from trade unionists young and old, whether the apprentice in the workshop or the union General Secretary. Now, with the majority won in the Labour Party conference for an end to the twelve years of a bipartisan war policy, everything has indeed changed; and now there is needed more than ever an immense increase in Socialist discussion and education such as L.M. provides a forum for. What could be more timely than our present series on *Problems of Trade Unionism in the Sixties*? Questions opened up in November by the printers' leader, Robert Willis ('Turning Point for Trade Unionists') and the Yorkshire mining M.P., Dick Kelley ('Antidote for Defeatism') are followed by the contributions on pp. 555-560. Each week swells the queue of articles including, for example, those by John Newton (Tailors & Garment Workers), Harry Weaver (Builders), and Frank Winchester (Vehicle Builders). It is striking that two leading trade unionists (one a general secretary) have concentrated upon peace and war questions. Today a 'bread and butter' question cannot but be considered against the background of the over-riding 'life and death' question. Perhaps the one single factor which made this great change at Scarborough was that life and death has become 'trade union business' in a big way.

There is another reason why this series is timely—a more domestic reason. For after this issue we enter on our fortieth year of publication. Following 'Black Friday', 1921, and the dismay in the labour and trade union movement at the break up of spurious forms of unity, L.M. first started to provide a forum for trade unionists who, whatever their differences, were agreed on the need for feeling the way forward to a real unity in struggle of the working class and the mass of the people. Throughout next year we shall be celebrating in various ways: I would ask readers to start now by ensuring that the Series receives the attention it deserves. Bring it to the notice of your organisation. Use it as a starting point for discussion on constructive lines, in your factory and trade union branch, etc. Discuss it and send in your own contributions. You have only to ask us and we will circularise your organisation about orders for the whole series; or we can send you copies of a circular to hand out yourselves, as some prefer. But don't delay. New readers will be asking for back numbers for months to come; we don't want to reply 'Sold out' as we had to with the September number containing Arthur Horner's *Coal: What Future?* Warmest thanks to all who answered our appeal to return their September copy. Like the Kent reader who wrote: 'I have always made it a practice to hand L.M. on as soon as I have read mine, only asking that it should be handed on

(Continued on page iii of cover)

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1. *Economic Storm Clouds*

It used to be said that a trade cycle took seven or eight years. Now, however, because governments in the more advanced countries, at least, have learned more about the factors that control economics, the period has shortened. From peak to peak a typical cycle lasts more like four years.

(A. P. L. Barber, Economic Secretary to the Treasury, House of Commons, November 10, 1960.)

ONCE again, not within four years even, but within less than three years of last time, the capitalist economic sky has darkened, especially in the United States and Britain. In the United States the rise of the official total of unemployed in October to 3·6 million (well known to be below the real total) or 6·4 per cent was withheld from announcement until the day after the presidential election. This delay in breaking the ugly facts did not save the Eisenhower-Nixon administration from the wrath of the people, even though the sheer bafflement and frustration of the enforced 'Hobson's choice' between the two candidates of wealth led to only a small and even precarious majority for Kennedy. In Britain the crisis of wholesale dismissals and short-time working in the so recently booming car and radio industries has highlighted the situation. The motor industry, whose output represents one-quarter of the total output of Britain's engineering and shipbuilding industries, is ever the most subject to sharp fluctuations and the most sensitive to register speedily the movements of the market. But

CONTENTS

Vol. XLII DECEMBER · 1960

	Page
NOTES OF THE MONTH: 1. *Economic Storm Clouds;* 2. *Trade Unions and Politics,* by R.P.D.	529
THE PRESS JUNGLE, by R. W. Briginshaw	543
WHO BLOCKS DISARMAMENT? by Quæstor	546
POLARIS AND CONSENT, by Gordon Schaffer	551
NATO PREVENTS PEACE, by George Scott	555
DISCUSSION: L. H. G. Guy and 'Engineer'	558
CUBA: TWO SHORT YEARS, by C. Desmond Greaves	561
GOLD SCARES, by John Eaton ...	564
UNITED NATIONS IN THE CONGO; A Diary of Events, H.R. ...	566
Book Reviews:	
Room at the Bottom, by Katherine Hood: *D. N. Pritt,* Q.C.; Sowing: An Autobiography of the Years 1880-1904, by Leonard Woolf: *Archibald Robertson;* A Garnet Bracelet, by Alexander Kuprin: The Simpleton, by A. Pisemsky: Outside Paradise, by A. Upits: It Happened in Penkovo, by S. Antonov: *June Moss*	569

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the same spectre confronts the prospect of shipbuilding. The blow has already fallen on the miners, with a Robens to administer it. Before them it was the textile workers that were the hardest hit. Such are the beauties of the 'new capitalism' beloved of Mr. Gaitskell and Mr. Strachey. The treasury boasts that modern governments in the West have now learned to 'control economics' so that depression comes round every four years instead of every eight. A charming 'controlled economy' which blasts homes.

Ups and Downs

Where now is the bright and buoyant optimism with which the capitalist world entered on the beginning of this year?

> Rarely has a new decade been greeted with such buoyant optimism in the economic world as the nineteen-sixties. Already the 'golden sixties' are being warmly welcomed on all sides.
>
> There is no mistaking the current optimism. The stock markets in Wall Street and London have both finished the old year at new peaks. In London share prices have risen over 50 per cent in a year. This confidence is not confined to the stock markets. Business optimism is rising fast both here and abroad.
>
> (*The Times*, January 1, 1960.)

For a short time share prices were boosted up to still more crazy heights while the suckers were drawn in to pour their savings into the unit trusts in the fond belief that little fish are meant to share in the feast of the cormorants. Then the fall began, especially in the United States. In Britain the deficit in the balance of payments had reappeared by the second quarter, to mount up still further in the third. In June the Government clamped on the 6 per cent Bank Rate and the new credit squeeze to bolster up the pound. *The Times*, so joyful and optimistic in January, by June breathed only resentment and gloom:

> The necessity of resorting to these monetary measures so soon after the economy had begun to re-expand is disturbing and unsatisfactory, and a serious reflection on the Government's economic policy.
>
> (*The Times*, June 24, 1960.)

By September U.S. steel production was running at 53 per cent of capacity, and the *Financial Times* was pronouncing the verdict:

> This year seems fated to go down in history as the year of the disappearing boom.

Capitalism, it appears, is still capitalism after all.

Mysteries of 'Controlled Capitalism'

Already in January of this year Mr. Amory, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, let the cat out of the bag and initiated the public

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into the mysteries of his magic art of 'controlling' capitalism:

> As always, we must steer a careful course between inflation and deflation, at one time stimulating demand if it slackens, and at another moderating it if it becomes exuberant. A year ago through tax reductions and an expansion of credit a measure of stimulation was administered. This has worked. Recently a cautionary movement in the reverse direction was due.
>
> (Rt. Hon. D. H. Amory, Chancellor of the Exchequer, January 25, 1960.)

Up we go. Down we come. Is it not a delightful economic system under which we have the privilege of living? Mr. Macmillan and Lord Hailsham will never tire of explaining that this perpetual switchback, with its obvious failure to use productive resources and its retardation of economic growth, is the worthwhile price of the 'free' economic system under which the West lives. But in fact no longer the 'free' liberal pre-monopoly competitive capitalism of the old style, with its precipitous heights of boom and slump. Nor yet the common sense organisation and continuous growth of the modern socialist economy of production for use. Instead—'controlled' seasickness.

In Human Terms

Tens of thousands of families in key industrial centres of Britain and Northern Ireland are thrown at a moment's notice into unemployment or find their incomes slashed by short time and the $2\frac{1}{2}$ or 3-day week. Hundreds of millions of pounds of profits have been made from the labour of these same workers during the past few years—plenty enough to maintain them at full wages until new employment is found. But that is not how the 'free' system works. After piling up the profits for their masters, the moment they are no longer wanted, they are thrown on the scrapheap with a week's notice. Are these the 'submerged tenth'—the two and a half to three millions dependent on poor relief in Britain, or the 'seventeen million Americans' who 'go to bed hungry every night' of Kennedy's election speeches, for whom prophets of the 'affluent society' still have tears as representing the 'exceptional' stratum of poverty? No. These are the 'prosperous' 'high wage' workers presented by the Jays and Croslands as the 'new classless working class' escaped from proletarian subjection, for whom the old class propaganda of the obsolete Labour movement is meaningless, since in their luxurious abundance of material well-being they no longer have any grievances save a few spiritual frustrations. And now? The homes which

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were paraded in the servile press and Tory election propaganda as the homes of high wages and 'you never had it so good' prosperity have now become the scene of a thousand personal tragedies. Capitalism is still capitalism.

Answer, Gentlemen of the Right!

Where now is Mr. Gaitskell in this real fight of the workers? Where now are all his friends and prophets of the 'new' 'crisis-free' capitalism, the Jays and the Stracheys and the Croslands and all the rest of the petty academic crew of rosewater beautifiers of capitalism? Silence descends upon them when their fairytale theories are confronted with brute facts. What is Mr. Gaitskell, that doughty self-styled 'fighter' against his own party, doing to help the fight of the car workers against capitalism? What about Mr. Carron, so valiant against the militant trade unionists to denounce them as 'werewolves', and so exuberant in geniality at dinners with the employers? Here is the test of practice, of real capitalism, gentlemen of the right wing. What is your answer? What is your advice to the car workers? Mr. Gaitskell and his friends are too busy helping the Tories to impose the Polaris missile site to have time for the battle of the car workers against redundancy dismissals, or of the miners in the closed pits or of the imprisoned rent strikers. Mr. Carron and his friends on the Executive Council of the A.E.U. are busily engaged in using the machinery and finances of the union to circulate literature challenging the union's own democratically decided policy, as 'Engineer's' letter in our current issue reminds us.

Socialist Answer

It is indeed appropriate that the forty-third anniversary of the victorious socialist revolution should have brought into sharp focus the socialist answer at the very moment of the redundancy dismissals in Britain or the three and a half million official unemployment figure in the United States. The anniversary celebration did not merely bring into view that industrial production in the Soviet Union for 1959-60 has increased 23 per cent, against a plan target of 17 per cent for the two years (industrial output in Britain 'has now stopped rising'—*Treasury Bulletin for Industry,* November, 1960), or over the sixteen post-war years since 1945 has increased at an annual rate of 10·7 per cent against 1·8 per cent for the United States. It also brought out the information that 50 million out of

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some 55 million Soviet factory and office workers have now gone over to the six or seven-hour day, and the switch will be completed by the end of the year. The average Soviet working week will then be 40·2 hours—less than in Britain, France, West Germany or the United States.

Shorter Hours and Rising Standards

But are not many British and American car workers now being cut down to a 2½ to 3-day or 19-hour week? True, with a corresponding slash in their wages to sudden poverty, and goodbye to the beautiful H.P. goods. It is only under socialism that automation brings no terrors and that technical advance means shorter hours with higher standards. The current Seven Year Plan will bring to Soviet workers not only the shortest working day and working week in the world, but simultaneously a 40 per cent increase in real wages. Let Mr. Carron put that in his pipe and smoke it. It is worth adding, for those who may be bemused by pictures of Western 'freedom' and the socialist 'police' state, that prisons are now having to be successively dismantled in the Soviet Union for lack of occupants, while a grand new plan for building new prisons has had to be inaugurated in Britain to ease the overcrowding of the present vastly increased prison population.

Tory Economic Policy

While no one in his senses would dream of accusing the Tory Government or any capitalist goverment of being able to control capitalism, there is no doubt that the present offensive of the Government and the employers against the industrial workers, which finds expression at this moment in the wholesale redundancy dismissals and imposition of short time, is the deliberate and planned offensive of the Tory Government's economic policy. Every one recalls the election spree, with the tax reliefs and easing of hire purchase and credit facilities to encourage a spending boom on the basis of which the 'Tory prosperity' and 'you never had it so good' election propaganda could be put over. Let us never forget that the Labour revisionists aided and abetted this Tory propaganda by highlighting the same facts to paint the same spurious picture of the miraculous 'new capitalism' and the supposed prosperity of the higher paid workers. It is the Gaitskells, Jays and Stracheys, with their grandiose theories in essence glorifying modern capitalism, who were the

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true organisers of the Tory election victories of the fifties—together with their Orwell-inspired propaganda of denunciation of socialism.*

Reversing the Engines

Immediately after the election spree to win votes, at the beginning of this year the Tory Government, as in the Amory statement quoted above, openly proclaimed their plan to reverse the engines and apply restrictions on the economy by the credit squeeze, restriction of hire purchase and high interest rates. 'A cautionary movement in the reverse direction' in the charming phrase of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which somehow failed to be included in the election manifesto. These high interest rates not only served to line the pockets of the financiers and bring rich profits to the City from foreign short term capital rushed to London—at whatever cost to British exporters and the consequent effects on the balance of payments. Some of the classic contradiction of the nineteen-thirties era between the interests of the City and the interests of the industrialists, characteristic of the distinctive structure of British finance-capital in contrast to the French-German model, has begun to reappear in the present phase.

Short History of Post-War British Capitalism

This trend has always been the hallmark of the deeper decay and imperialist parasitic character of modern British capitalism. It was temporarily and partially interrupted immediately after the war by the heavy reduction of the overseas capital assets and the consequent enforced domestic reconstruction, with starveling Daltonian rates for the financiers, and spurt at all costs to rebuild the overseas capital assets. Once these had been rebuilt, there followed the increasing reversion to type during the fifties, with higher interest rates and the conspicuous lag in the rate of development of British manufacturing production and exports in contrast with its main capitalist competitors in Western Europe and Japan. Thus between 1950 and 1958 industrial output of West Germany rose by 111 per cent, of Italy by 81 per cent, and of France by 65 per cent, but of Britain by only 21 per cent. Similarly between 1950 and 1959 Britain's share in the capitalist world exports of manufactures fell from 25·5 per cent to 17·3 per cent. The first period of British post-war capitalism found political expression in the Labour Government, with its nationalisation measures and austerity. The second

*'The effect of George Orwell's books on public opinion had been enormous. The impact of his *1984*, a picture of what life was like under socialism, had more than any other single factor to do with the Socialists' defeat in the 1951 general election'. (C. Curran, Conservative M.P., House of Commons, July 21, 1960.) A tribute from a worthy source.

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period, during the fifties, comparable in certain respects (not in others) with the Baldwin era of the nineteen-thirties, has found its suitable political expression in the Conservative Governments, with the 'unflappable' Adenauer-courting Macmillan replacing simultaneously the 'placid' pipe-smoking Baldwin and the Hitler-courting Neville Chamberlain.

Parasites' Paradise

It is worth noting that interest on the National Debt rose between 1951 and 1959 from £550 million to £778 million, and on local authorities' loans from £89 million to £265 million, while landlords' income from rent rose in the same period from £511 million to £1,082 million. Not without reason that incomparable master of the apt phrase, Mr. Butler, in his defence of the Rent Act in parliament on November 8, used what the *Daily Telegraph* next day wryly described as the 'unfortunate' expression that 'the Rent Act is going to bring dividends in the end'. Nor would it be correct to imagine that the lag in the advance of British production or exports under the Conservative Government has meant a lag in the profits of the industrialists. Between 1951 and 1959 the profits of companies, including nationalised industries, rose from £2,326 million to £3,806 million. Between the same years the market values of ordinary shares of companies rose from £9,600 million in 1951 to £21,400 million in September, 1959, or an increase of £11,800 million. It was in 1960 that the fall in these inflated values began.

Economic Offensive

These astronomical increases in the cash incomes (alongside tax reductions on those incomes) of all the parasites, landlords, moneylenders and coupon-clippers under a decade of Conservative Government (the marvellous new 'Contemporary Capitalism', as Strachey would say, but Gaitskell and Crosland are doubtful whether it should any longer be called capitalism) are not whistled out of thin air. They have to take material shape out of the labour of the workers. It is here that arises the elegant double action effect of the Conservative Government's economic policy. The higher interest rates have not only served to line the pockets of the financiers. The consequent contraction of the economy provides the basis to attack the standards of the workers and seek to head off their demands on wages or hours or enforce retreats by the fall in the level of employment, fear of the sack, redundancy dismissals and victimisation of shop

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stewards. In all the countries of the capitalist world, but especially in the United States and Britain, signs have gathered of what is nowadays euphemistically called 'a recession'. Once again the only solution of the capitalists is to try to throw the burden on the workers.

Trade Unions and Politics

It is in this situation that the trade unions now occupy the main front of battle of the whole labour movement. The advance of the left in the Labour Party has occupied universal attention and is transforming the political situation and perspective in Britain. But this advance of the left in the Labour Party has only been made possible by the role of the trade unions. It has been made possible by the transformation of the role of the majority of the trade unions from that of passive bulwark of the dominant right wing political leadership to that of the main powerful and irresistible driving force of the progressive sweep forward for militant policies in the interests of the working class, peace and socialism. But this transformation in the role of the trade unions has not taken place in a vacuum. It is a reflection of the sharpening of the class struggle and of the economic situation, and of the deepening of the conflict against the policies of monopoly capitalism, including the war policies of monopoly capitalism. Hence the new confrontation is developing simultaneously in the industrial and in the political fields.

Trade Unions' Testing Time

The level of the industrial and the political struggle has risen simultaneously during the current year—always a sign that the left victories at Douglas and Scarborough were not some temporary unrepresentative 'doctrinaire' or 'pacifist' aberration, as the Gaitskells and Carrons would like to pretend, but a barometer of rising class struggle. During the first nine months of 1960, 8,153,000 workers won wage increases of £2,966,000 per week, together with some gains on the shorter hours front. This contrasts with the first nine months of 1959, when 4,236,000 workers won wage increases of £1,085,000 per week. In fact, however, the 1960 gains were only a very partial overtaking of ground lost in the relative lag of 1959. Advances in wage rates during the recent period have fallen far behind the advance in productivity or in profits and dividends. During 1959 productivity rose 8 per cent, profits 10 per cent, dividends 13 per cent, but wage rates only 2·6 per cent. Yet at the first

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sign of rising militancy in 1960, the full counter-offensive of the Government, the employers, the capitalist press, television and the right wing trade union leaders has been launched against militant trade unionism, strikes and shop stewards. The political counter-offensive in the Labour Party by the same reactionary alliance to reverse the decisions of Scarborough is the parallel of this industrial counter-offensive. In both cases the trade unions are the centre of the battle, where the final decisions will be reached. Therefore it is urgent to look to the preparedness of the trade union movement from top to bottom for the struggles which have now opened. It is in relation to this testing time of trade unionism that our series 'Problems of Trade Unionism in the Sixties' by leading trade union representatives has been launched as a contribution to discussion and preparedness.

What Kind of General Council?

In 1921 the General Council was formed to replace the old 'Parliamentary Committee' and constitute, in the aims of the pioneers, a General Staff of Labour. At that time the Assistant Secretary (later, Secretary) of the Trades Union Congress, Fred Bramley, could write, envisaging a future Triple Alliance of Trade Unionism, Co-operation and Labour Politics:

> A workers' combine of this kind, representing somewhere about 12,000,000 adults and 25,000,000 of the population, would make the passing of resolutions of protest against the present economic system as but a foolish pastime. We should so act that capitalism and all its disadvantages would disappear.

This was your predecessor, George Woodcock. How sharp the descent even in claims and aims. In these Notes in the October, 1921, issue of our journal we wrote of the formation of the General Council:

> The birth of Labour's new General Council has taken place amid scenes of no very great enthusiasm. . . . The lack of notice is the less surprising, in so far as the difference in personnel between the old Parliamentary Committee and the new General Council is, apart from the increase in numbers, almost negligible. And yet the formation of this new General Staff of Labour will either have to mean the beginning of a new period in the history of Labour in this country; or else it will mean the failure of the last experiment of the old trade unionism to face the conditions of modern capitalism. Is the General Council the last stage of the old order or the first stage of the new? That is the question which the coming period will have to decide.
>
> (Notes of the Month, *Labour Monthly*, October, 1921.)

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Close on forty years have passed since we wrote those words. The General Council is still far from fulfilling the dreams of the pioneers.

Serving What Master?

That the General Council, under its so far dominant right wing majority, and despite the participation at different times of first-class militant fighters in its midst, has up to the present signally failed to lead the army of eight million trade unionists or co-ordinate their industrial struggles, is by now a familiar story. The great leap forward of the Douglas Trades Union Congress this year, which laid the foundation for the Scarborough victories, was not inspired by the General Council—on the contrary. At that same Congress the General Council majority aimed at putting over a Report on Strikes and Shop Stewards which coincided with and played into the hands of the parallel offensive by the employers and the capitalist press.

A Curious Manifesto

But at least it might have been thought that these paid functionaries of the unions, these sticklers for constitutional propriety, would have considered it their duty to carry out the decisions of their organisations. Again on the contrary. Twenty members of the General Council have signed a manifesto to declare that 'we as members of the General Council should like to make it clear that we adhere to' the minority defeated H-bomb and NATO statement which was rejected at Scarborough. The signatories include, not merely the representatives of the defeated minority, but the official 'representatives' of the major unions which carried the majority resolution for unilateral nuclear disarmament and the removal of American bases. Carron, placed on the General Council by the nomination of the A.E.U., signs this public manifesto against the policy vote of the A.E.U. and the majority decision of the Labour Party Conference; similarly Greene of the National Union of Railwaymen; and others. What kind of 'representation' is this? Whom do they 'represent'? Their unions? Or their august selves? Once it was the boast of these right wing trade union officials, when they yelped for action against a Bevan or a Zilliacus, that they as trade unionists, in contrast to 'the politicians', understood the virtues of 'discipline' and 'loyalty' to majority decisions. This conception appears to have vanished, once the boot is on the other foot. Is it not time that the unions should begin to concern themselves a little more with the character and functioning of some of their representatives on the General Council?

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Who Are These 'Trade Union M.P.s'?

Still more peculiar is the case of the so-called 'Group of Trade Union M.P.s', a group with no official standing in the structure of the Labour Party, and which used to perform an auxiliary function in relation to industrial legislation, but which its present officers (for this unofficial group has its own officers) appear to imagine they can use as a kind of right wing caucas. This group on November 7 was reported, at a meeting of 60 of its 96 members, to have carried a resolution of confidence in Mr. Gaitskell, deploring 'public attacks' upon him, at the very moment when he was engaged in defying Conference majority decisions carried by the votes of unions which pay for these M.P.s. The resolution, oddly enough, was moved by a member of the Transport and General Workers' Union, the largest union supporting the policy defied by Gaitskell, and was seconded by a lord. It is evident that these 'Trade Union M.P.s' do not represent the trade unions, which expressed their democratic majority viewpoint clearly enough at Scarborough. The old-fashioned trade union conception of loyalty to majority decisions of their organisations has also evidently disappeared from their ranks.

Engels on Some Labour M.P.s

Three quarters of a century ago Engels wrote some words possibly applicable to some of these 'Trade Union M.P.s':

> There will be workers in Parliament, in increasing numbers, and each one worse than the last. But that is necessary in England. All the scoundrels who played the part of respectable bourgeois radicals at the time of the International must show themselves in Parliament for what they are. Then the masses will turn socialist here too.
>
> (Engels, letter to J. P. Becker, June 15, 1885.)

And again:

> What is most necessary of all here is that masses of the official labour leaders should get into Parliament. Then things will soon go finely; they will expose themselves quickly enough.
>
> (Engels, letter to Bebel, October 28, 1885.)

On another occasion he satirically suggested that the best way to get rid of some of the obsolete misfits in the working class organisations would be to send them into parliament. A piece of satirical advice which seems regrettably to have been followed all too literally in some quarters.

Trade Union Responsibility and Parliamentary Representation

But that was three-quarters of a century ago. It is time to move on a stage. Martin Harrison, in his industrious and carefully docu-

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mented study 'Trade Unions and the Labour Party Since 1945',* has described the pathetic situation of the 'Trade Union M.P.s', suspended in limbo between a parliamentary political leadership which awards them few plums and a trade union leadership with which they have little connection. He quotes the unhappy complaint of one of their number:

> Those of us who find ourselves working on the political side of the union's activities are made to feel rather cut off from it. Apart from occasional meetings with and communications from Executive Council, our contacts with our fellow members of the Union are of the most tenuous nature.

It is time that the unions treated seriously this question of parliamentary representation. The unions have still in their gift, even if on a diminishing scale owing to previous neglect, some of the best impregnable working class constituencies—the equivalent of the 'pocket boroughs' of the working class, just as the Tory cathedral cities and watering places are in practice no more than the 'pocket boroughs' of Toryism in the archaic British constitution. Such unchallengeable strongholds of the working class, instead of being used as refuges for superannuation or for rejects from higher union office, should be exploited to the full as the invulnerable base for the most effective fighters and champions of the working class to bring honour equally to the union that selects them as its voice and to the whole working class whose representatives they are. For the fulfilment of this aim, not only greater care in selection, but continuous contact after return to parliament is essential.

United Industrial and Political Battle

It is a single industrial and political battle—at all times, but more than ever in present conditions. The traditional structure of the British labour movement is such that the trade unions carry the main weight, not only in the industrial battle, but also in the Labour Party. Previously they have not exercised their potential strength in the political field, because under dominantly right wing leadership they have provided in general passive voting majorities for a parliamentary political leadership pursuing capitalist politics. But the political advance in the unions has now reached the stage of begin-

**Trade Unions and the Labour Party Since 1945* by Martin Harrison. Allen & Unwin. 32s. A valuable and indispensable survey, irrespective of the outlook of the author (which is not obtruded, and follows conventional 'moderate' lines) for all concerned with the source material in this important field. The study covers, with many tables and considerable statistical detail, the payment of the political levy and the trade union financial role in the Labour Party; policy formation, at the branch level, the union delegate conference and the party national conference, with an analysis of the role of different unions on different issues; the election of the Executive; and trade union parliamentary representation. Some unpublished sources are used, and full use is made of union journals.

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ning to challenge the capitalist politics of the parliamentary leadership and return majorities for new independent policies. From this point the crisis opens—the battle which at this stage expresses itself as the battle over the future policy and leadership of the Labour Party. But it is evident to all that the question of leadership cannot be solved in terms of this or that individual. What is involved is the victory of a political trend, which in turn requires corresponding political organisation. It is here that we come to the essential character of the present battle as a class battle, which expresses itself superficially in the rival parliamentary alignments, and more profoundly in the question of the relation of the Conference and the parliamentary representatives.

Class and Party

The trade unions are not as such political organisations; yet they have to exercise a decisive political role in the present crisis in the Labour Party. This is the crux of the problem of the present situation. The unions are class organisations, drawing in all workers irrespective of politics. In these conditions either capitalist or working class politics must prevail. Spontaneity means the domination of capitalist politics (the right wing). But the victory of working class politics requires corresponding organisation, other than the all-inclusive unions, yet within the unions: in other words a political class party of the fight of the working class and socialism, not separate from the unions, but rooted in the industrial working class and the unions as the voice, the spearhead and organising force of the common fight. This is the indispensable rôle of the Communist Party in the common advance of the left and the working class movement. Once this alliance develops of the political class party and the mass organisations of the trade unions, the conditions open for decisive change in the political labour movement and in the political future in Britain. Scarborough has shown that this alliance is beginning to develop, though much needs still to be done to strengthen and carry forward this alliance. The supreme immediate task now is to unite all sections to ensure the fulfilment of the Scarborough decisions and the victory of democracy in the labour movement, in order to go forward in the present fight against the economic offensive and the war policies of capitalism and Toryism, and thus prepare the way for the greater political changes which are becoming ever more manifestly urgent in Britain.

November 15, 1960. R.P.D.

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DON'T MISS THIS!

Turn to page 555 for this month's contributions to our Problems of Trade Unionism in the Sixties *series.*

Amongst future contributions to the series already in hand are the following: THE GREAT TRAGEDY, *by* **JOHN NEWTON** *(who, as most of our readers will know, is a member of the General Council of the Trades Union Congress and secretary of the Tailor & Garment Workers); articles by* **HARRY WEAVER** *(Building Trade Workers),* **F. S. WINCHESTER** *(Vehicle Builders),* **GEORGE ELVIN** *(Cinetechnicians), etc., as well as Discussion items from leading shop stewards and job representatives. Order your copies NOW. (See back cover.)*

SELF-EDUCATION

Keep clear of the poison of the press
Let your grand old misleaders alone
It will pay for all your pains to educate your brains
And do a little thinking of your own.
When leisure and pleasure shall be free,
And hardship and hunger shall go
When the worker has his place at the top of the tree
And the loafer is somewhere down below, below,
And the loafer is somewhere down below.

C. W. Beckett, published in *Commonweal,* March 17, 1888.

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THE PRESS JUNGLE

R. W. Briginshaw

General Secretary, National Society of Operative Printers and Assistants.

THE concentration of large-scale newspaper and periodical printing into a small number of powerful business groups has led to a position of near monopoly in national newspaper production. Space will not allow the detailing of the different groupings which operate in both the national and English provincial as well as the Scottish press, but the demise of the *News Chronicle* and the London evening paper *The Star* focuses attention on a further development in this process.

In articles in *Natsopa Journal* I warned that cold war political conformity would further weaken and eventually kill some newspapers. This factor, together with faltering and inept management, ended these two papers. I anticipated in May last that if such a thing happened, efforts would be made to put the blame on printing workers and journalists and their unions which seek to obtain and maintain decent wages and working conditions for their members. Two Tory Members of Parliament—Captain H. B. Kerby and Dr. Donald Johnson—dragged in a red herring when they put down a question in the House of Commons complaining of printing workers' restrictive practices. In time similar charges have been made against miners, railwaymen, engineers, amongst others, of ruining their industries when they struggled for better conditions.

These angry spoutings are not borne out by facts. In the printing industry the major percentages go on raw materials, overheads and expenses other than production wages. Even with these expenses, the *Mirror* Group profited in the past financial half year to the tune of £2,319,777. The *News Chronicle-Star* set-up, whilst not expecting to reach this level, could have profitably survived had it not been for 'the failure of management—a combination of fussiness and uncertainty'. I think the aptest epitaph came from James Cameron writing to *Reynolds News* recently:

> the *News Chronicle* died of thrombosis, which is an active circulation impeded by clots.

In May last I wrote:

> The *News Chronicle*—whoever was responsible for the death of its Radical policy—will be responsible for its total death, whether it is next year, the year after, or in ten years' time. At present the *Chronicle*, a policy ghost of the past, conforms with the NATO best.

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Neither the *News Chronicle* nor *The Star* need have died. In both their fields, real anti-Establishment newspapers are needed. Instead of providing platforms of Radical opposition, they fawned on the Establishment and regularly stabbed at trade unionists. Others fawn and stab to better business.

That a newspaper which, with all its faults, can command a circulation of over a million and can be pushed towards death by large-scale advertisers is in itself a scandal. It is a contradiction and denial of democracy and freedom that organs of expression, even when they lap up the capitalist Establishment, can be pushed out of existence because the advertising life blood is withheld from them, run as they are primarily as businesses. Life in the newspaper and periodical printing world, as matters stand, resembles a jungle in which the weakest go to the wall. At present there is no doubt that those individuals and groups in control of the newspapers in this country have freedom of expression. They use this in such a way as to protect, preserve and project their interests in particular and those of the Establishment in general. Ninety-nine per cent of the press is for the Establishment, one way or another. Jeremy Thorpe, M.P., in commenting on the demise of the two papers recently, said:

> More than ever before the right wing was now left with a virtual monopoly of the national press.

Monopoly of such an integral part of our life is self-evidently bad. The same views, with a more, or less, ultra slant—according to the predilections of the paper concerned—are presented to the populace, whose ideas are thus influenced by the unadulterated voice of the Establishment. The 99 per cent press monopoly in the hands of similar minded operators—it is not the end they quarrel about, only the means—plus the B.B.C. and T.V. (commercial television is owned by and large by the same monopolists controlling the newspapers) means the monotone of propaganda, the double-think of conformity, the brainwashing on behalf of big business, being thrust morning, noon and night before the people of this country. The voice of sanity can be but a small voice crying in the wilderness when this lot gets going—look at their unanimity in connection with the Summit failure, their whole-hearted support for Gaitskell. Yes, the 'Fourth Estate',* although divided between individuals, provides a singleness of mind when it comes to the basic issues. They will, to

*The Three Estates of the Realm, supposed to control Britain, are the Lords Spiritual, the Lords Temporal and the Commons. Edmund Burke, eighteenth century reactionary Parliamentarian and orator, is credited with inventing the 'Fourth Estate', when, pointing to the Reporters' Gallery in the House of Commons, he exclaimed: 'Yonder sits the Fourth Estate, more important than them all'. But at that time the press was not owned by millionaire monopolists: on the contrary, it was then a threat to the old-established order which Burke represented.—ED., *L.M.*

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their last breath, defend their set-up and attack anything that threatens their position, or the position of those on behalf of whom they operate, even against basic national patriotism.

I believe that we all have an interest in the social effect of the application of near monopoly in national newspaper production. We, as citizens, must challenge the humbug of those owners and editors who claim they are operating newspapers in the public interest; that their objective is a check inside our country on bureaucracy; that they are a respectable 'Fourth Estate'. How rich, after the Diana Dors epics, *Forever Amber* and the prostitution of D. H. Lawrence's writings! Most of them are awfully shy concerning the truth that they are engaged, as they are entitled to be under the set-up, in running newspapers as businesses and edifices of power. Roy Thomson has the attribute, in this regard, of being patently honest and open about this matter; but what he says openly is a fact of life so far as newspaper production in this country is concerned.

Let me repeat what I said elsewhere in this connection. The labour and trade union movement, in particular the printing trade unions in the industry, together with an aroused public opinion, must express themselves on these important matters. Printing trade unionists have a double interest: firstly, as citizens in the social effect and application of monopolisation of national newspapers in particular and the domination of groupings in the provincial press; and secondly, as printing trade unionists with our fellows in the Printing and Kindred Trades Federation, we have a particular interest in seeking indications for a stable future for those employed in newspaper production. Public expression must find its way into the Houses of Parliament again as it did following the conclusion of the war when the press and its operation in all its aspects came in for considerable fire and criticism. A new 'white-washing' Royal Commission will not be sufficient.

We must see what can be done both publicly and otherwise to provide some solid foundation for the possibilities that if newspapers are a public and social necessity, the service to the community should be supported by public funds to the extent at least of providing buildings and equipment for proper expression in the basic interests of the people of our country, challenging the near monopolists of the Establishment. Fresh thought must be given to ways and means of establishing a really free press in Britain, not dominated by big business in the interests of the narrow Establishment. The British people are entitled to speak and be heard.

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WHO BLOCKS DISARMAMENT?

Quaestor

> Until such time as the political agreement is concluded, the Delegation should therefore go very slowly with the conversations. . . . Until the political agreement is reached, the Delegation must treat the Russians with reserve. . . . The British Government is unwilling to enter into any detailed commitments which are likely to tie our hands in all cases.
>
> *From the British Government's instructions to its Delegation negotiating in Moscow about military mutual assistance against Hitler, August,* 1939.*

SUCH were the sage directions given by Downing Street to its military mission at a moment when Hitler had 2,000,000 men concentrated round the Polish borders, when in every speech he was threatening to attack Poland—and when the British press was faithfully echoing Foreign Office propaganda that the Government was doing all in its power to speed up an early military agreement with the Soviet Union and thus facilitate a political pact of mutual assistance. In fact, therefore, the Foreign Office was lying. The British Government was preventing an early agreement, not trying to hasten it. Soothing public alarm with empty assurances, it was in reality dragging out the talks on the off-chance that Hitler would decide to attack the U.S.S.R. before any British-Soviet agreement to stand by each other was reached.

Can anyone who has followed the recent negotiations about disarmament, twenty years later, doubt that—in some secret file or other—there are similar instructions, sent to the British delegation discussing disarmament, first at Geneva and then at the United Nations Assembly? And with a similar purpose, to avoid any commitment to disarm, on the off-chance that before any agreement is reached, the Pentagon and political gangsters ruling the U.S.A. may on some pretext attack the Soviet Union?

Can there be any other explanation of the fact that, directly the U.S.S.R. in 1955 accepted the levels of reduced armies and armaments on which Britain, France and the U.S.A. had been insisting for many months, the capitalist Powers repudiated them?

Can there be any other explanation of the fact that, when the U.S.S.R. in 1958 accepted the preliminary condition for a treaty stopping nuclear tests on which Britain, France and the U.S.A. had been insisting for many months (that a conference of experts should agree about means of detection) and the conference reached full

*Documents of British Foreign Policy, 1939, Vol. VI, p. 763.

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agreement in a few weeks, the capitalist Powers immediately dragged out of a hat the bogey of underground tests, and refused to sign the treaty?

Can there be any other explanation of the fact that in March, 1959, when in Moscow, Macmillan agreed with Khrushchov that it would increase world security to study 'some method of limitation of forces and weapons, both conventional and nuclear, in an agreed area of Europe, coupled with an appropriate system of inspection'; and that, once the General Election was over, he 'forgot' the agreement?

Only people who want to be deceived can doubt that Macmillan is pursuing, in relations with the U.S.S.R. and particularly on the question of disarmament, the same policy as Chamberlain before the war. That of course is why Chamberlain's former confidant, Lord Home, was selected by Macmillan as his Foreign Secretary. That too is why Lord Home, after his first important journey in that capacity (to visit Adenauer), when asked by British journalists what he regarded as his main aim in foreign policy, did not reply that it was to achieve disarmament, or to relax international tension. No, he said it was: 'Containment of Communism'—just what Lord Halifax, one of Chamberlain's intimate advisers, complimented Hitler on, in November, 1937.

These basic truths about the Tory Government's foreign policy, which Gaitskell and his group of rebels against their party conference's decisions have never challenged, have been well illustrated by the course of disarmament discussions at the United Nations General Assembly.

On September 23 the Soviet delegation submitted draft principles of a treaty for general and complete disarmament under international supervision. This draft followed the lines of those submitted earlier, at the United Nations Assembly on September 18, 1959, and at the Geneva Disarmament Committee on June 2, 1960, with still further modifications to meet various western criticisms. It is important to note that, in regard to supervision, the draft provided that practical measures to set up an international control organisation should begin directly the treaty was *signed*, and that the organisation should begin to function 'the moment the treaty *comes into force*'. Thus it was clear that there could be no disarmament without control (supervision). Moreover, the draft laid down that

> at none of these (three) stages shall any State obtain any military advantages over other States through the process of disarmament.

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As an illustration of how these provisions would operate, one can take the first stage of the Soviet proposals, intended to be completed within twelve to eighteen months:

1. All means of delivery of nuclear weapons would be withdrawn from national armed forces, their manufacture stopped and their stocks destroyed.

2. These would include missiles, rockets, aircraft, surface ships, submarines, artillery and any other means capable of carrying atomic and nuclear weapons.

3. Armed forces would be cut down to agreed limits, with a maximum for the U.S.A. and the U.S.S.R. of 1,700,000 men each (at present the U.S.A. has 2,500,000 and the U.S.S.R. rather less). The arms and ammunition would be destroyed, their equipment scrapped or turned to peaceful uses, and the national defence budgets reduced accordingly.

4. All foreign troops would be withdrawn from other countries' territories to their own, and their bases closed down.

5. Rocket launchings, sailings of warships beyond territorial waters and flights of military planes capable of carrying nuclear weapons would stop, pending the complete destruction of means of delivering the latter. Rockets could be launched for peaceful purposes, but only under on-the-spot inspection.

6. States possessing nuclear weapons would undertake not to hand over such weapons, or information on how to produce them, to other States not possessing them.

7. International inspection groups would supervise the destruction of the different carriers of nuclear weapons; at military bases, airfields and ports, rocket-launching ramps and all factories, shipyards, etc., used for making nuclear weapons. Others would supervise disbanding of troops, destruction of armaments and ammunition, conversion of equipment, etc., and would have access to all documents relative to defence budgets.

8. In the first stage there would be joint study of measures to stop the manufacture of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons themselves, and to destroy their stocks, which would occur in the second stage.

9. The international control organisation would report on results of the first stage to the signatories of the treaty and to the United Nations.

What would be the effect of this scheme? Abolishing means of delivery would meet the point first raised by France, loudly applauded at the time. It would strike a crippling blow straight away at the peril of nuclear war, and prepare for doing away with the peril altogether. The point about submarines would eliminate both the Polaris base in Scotland and the rocket-firing submarines which the Soviet Union also possesses as Khrushchov has revealed. Cutting down armed forces by about one-third would effectively dispose of the myth (repeated by Gaitskell at Scarborough) that the Soviet land forces might 'overrun Western Europe'. For bearing in

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mind the size of the U.S.S.R. and its 40,000 miles of frontier, it could no more do that, against the other continental armies, than the U.S.A. could (in that case) invade the U.S.S.R. Thus, a real balance of forces at the lower level would be ensured. Restraining flights, warship sailings, etc., during stage I would add an element of international confidence. International inspection would be all-pervasive: at the same time it would begin *simultaneously* with disarmament, and the coming into force of the treaty (as distinct from its signature) could be arranged to ensure that the inspection machinery was ready to function. The preparations for preventing biological and chemical warfare would be a timely check on the brazen American preparations for it (the *Daily Telegraph* on November 8 printed a Washington message detailing these preparations, for which budgetary provisions exceeding $70 million a year are being made, on the lying pretext that 'the Russian Army is equipped to use chemical and bacteriological weapons').

It is instructive that most British newspapers on September 24 avoided setting out the Soviet proposals in detail; and some of them published grossly misleading accounts. Thus the *Guardian's* diplomatic correspondent said that the Soviet plan meant that the West would give up its nuclear deterrent 'without any reduction in the vastly larger Soviet conventional forces available in Europe'. His colleague at the United Nations cabled that Khrushchov had repeated previous proposals for 'total and instant disarmament'. The leading article the same day said that the plan contained no proposals 'about how the destruction of rockets, missiles, bombers and such is to be verified'. Again, the *Daily Telegraph* on September 30 said that 'the East' was refusing 'to agree to the necessary measures of inspection and control'.

Direct and brazen misrepresentations like these are one more piece of evidence that the apologists for the capitalist Powers feel the weakness of their own case. The last time they put forward any counter-proposal of their own was at Geneva on June 27; and what was stated about that proposal in this journal in August remains true in November; not a single British capitalist newspaper has dared to print the text of the American proposals introduced that day and backed by the British and French governments! Why? Simply because (as a summary in *The Times* of June 29, the only one vouchsafed to British readers, showed) the proposals did not include the slightest measure of disarmament in any field for years to come; but did provide for six different forms of 'control', which in the absence

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of any disarmament means espionage. And this is a settled line of policy—once more giving the lie to the Gaitskellites' story at Scarborough that it is the U.S.S.R. which is a menace to world peace. Opening the United Nations Assembly on September 22, President Eisenhower talked a lot about disarmament. But the only proposal he made was to stop production of fissionable material for weapons purposes—meaning that huge stocks already in existence would remain (Eisenhower proposed that 'substantial quantities' be transferred to international stockpiles) and nuclear weapons would go on being manufactured. Meanwhile experts would begin discussing how to verify their elimination—at some remote date in the future.

Again, when the Soviet delegation on October 13 introduced a resolution summarising the principal points of their plan, the western Powers next day introduced a counter-resolution which once again did not pledge any immediate disarmament, but in four of its six points laid stress on verification. As though to underline this, the British delegation simultaneously put in a separate resolution calling for a meeting of experts to 'examine means of verifying measures of disarmament'. The Soviet representatives repeatedly specified that they were ready to discuss verification at once, provided the representatives of the capitalist Powers agreed to discuss their proposals (or any alternative) which, if embodied in a treaty, would mean immediate and drastic measures of disarmament. But that was the one thing the British, American, French and Italian governments would not do. As a matter of fact, David Susskind, the leading American television commentator, when interviewing Khrushchov on October 9, put the issue very plainly: 'We consider that in the absence of trust, disarmament is simply impossible.' We should welcome such unusual frankness.

Naturally, the Foreign Office negotiators in 1939 did not tell the Russians—or their own people—that they considered a pact to stand by each other against Hitler was 'simply impossible'. But in practice they worked to sabotage such a pact. And the same is happening with disarmament today. Macmillan and Gaitskell do not say in public that they hate the U.S.S.R., and therefore that they regard a disarmament agreement with it as 'impossible'. But in practice they work to make it impossible—by standing pat for American bases and H-bomb stockpiles on British soil, for British subordination to the U.S.A. through the death-trap called NATO, for 'Polaris' submarines in British waters, and for the American-British refusal to accept or discuss in detail the Soviet proposals.

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POLARIS AND CONSENT

Gordon Schaffer

IN the light of Mr. Macmillan's attempts to suggest that although there is no agreement, Britain can expect to be consulted before Polaris or other nuclear weapons are used, it is useful to recall that President Roosevelt and Winston Churchill actually made an agreement that the United States would not use the atom bomb without British consent. The British government released the U.S.A. from that pledge in return for Marshall Aid. The story is told in the *Private Papers of Senator Vandenberg* (Houghton Mifflin Co., Boston) and the *Diary of James Forrestal* (Viking Press, New York).

Vandenberg's account (on page 359)—and it has never been denied by any of the parties—says that in the late spring or early summer of 1947, he and Senator Hickenlooper were startled to discover that President Roosevelt had agreed that the U.S. would not use the atomic bomb against any country without the consent of the British. The senators promptly got in touch with President Truman, Secretary of State Marshall and Defence Secretary Forrestal to 'express their surprise and opposition to any such arrangement and to urge the necessity for an immediate rectification of the agreement'. The diary goes on to record how Hickenlooper said he would not support American aid to Britain if this agreement remained in force and how they both told the administration that a satisfactory conclusion must be reached before any final action on the Marshall plan for aid to Britain. The Vandenberg Papers then go on to state that the British surrendered their right of veto on the use of the bomb in January, 1948.

The Forrestal diary (page 455) describes the surprise of the American government at the prompt acceptance by the British government of the proposal to send U.S. bombers to Britain in the summer of 1948 (after the right of veto on the bomb had been surrendered). The U.S. Ambassador was instructed to ask Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin if he had considered the 'implications' of this acceptance of the bombers. Bevin replied that he had, and the Editor of the Forrestal diaries adds the footnote:

> The diary does not further explain the 'implications' which General Marshall had in mind but some of them may be readily guessed. The B29s were known throughout the world as the atomic bombers and to put a strong force of them in Britain's bases would bring them within striking distance of Moscow.

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PIN MONEY

These pictures of social contrasts were
in London's Police Courts of the scand.
Thomas Hood wrote his *Song of the S*
of poor sempstresses were paid by the
shirt, and in proportion for other articl.
ing tailors who were known to have
und

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NEEDLE MONEY

published in 1849, following disclosures
weating of the sempstresses about whom
A contemporary account says 'Numbers
llers only three halfpence for making a
eady-made clothing sold by the advertis-
ed large fortunes by such disreputable
ient'.

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On July 15 Forrestal wrote in his diary:

> We have the opportunity *now* (underlined in the original) of sending these planes, and once sent they are an accepted fixture, whilst a deterioration of the situation in Europe might lead to a condition of mind under which the British would be compelled to reverse their present attitude.

Even Churchill himself at the time raised a startled eyebrow at this one-sided bargain, the meaning of which is now clear to all.

FOREVER ENGLAND

If I should die, think only this of me,
That there's some corner of a foreign land
That is forever England.

RUPERT BROOKE (1914).

We found the tomb neglected and defaced.... Part of the ironwork has already fallen or been wrenched away, and the railings at the head of the tomb barely hold together.... The imperial War Graves Commission had no responsibility for isolated burial places such as this.... The townspeople have renamed the open space surrounding his monument 'Cyprus Square'.

H. D. ZIMAN, *'Rupert Brooke's Neglected Grave'*, DAILY TELEGRAPH, October 14, 1960.

HUNGARIAN FREEDOM FIGHTERS

An interesting question is, who supplies the funds to hire the professionals who surround embassies and follow foreign visitors with insulting signs and shouted epithets? I find it hard to believe, but I am informed that substantial funds for such undesirable activities come from federal appropriations, under a disguised name.

After the Soviet Deputy Premier, Mr. Mikoyan, visited me in Cleveland, I made a point of investigating the group of Hungarians who endeavoured to molest him in Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago. It turned out that the identical people had gone into all three cities by car and had obviously been hired and financed by someone with ample funds, reputedly Uncle Sam. In Cleveland representatives of the State Department gave every evidence of conniving with the Hungarian hecklers by putting at their disposal the routes and locations most advantageous for their hostile demonstrations against the Mikoyan party.

I have also looked carefully into the background of the so-called Hungarian Freedom Fighters. Many of them turn out to be former officers of the Nazi Army that invaded Hungary; they were, of course, obliged to flee the country when Hitler was defeated.

CYRUS EATON, Cleveland industrialist, *Letter to Senator Fulbright*, DAILY TELEGRAPH, October 12, 1960.

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Problems of Trade Unionism in the Sixties

N.A.T.O. PREVENTS PEACE

George Scott *

IN a changing world nothing has been more fleeting than Labour's defence policy. Three times in the last three years it has suffered rapid and drastic change. This year it was indeed time for a change: and before we look at the next steps which must be taken, it is worth a glance back. We need not go so far back as the beginning of this sorry business when Ernest Bevin developed what his close acquaintance, the late G. D. H. Cole, described as his 'disastrous policy'; or when even the Tory Winston Churchill was astonished at Bevin inviting the U.S.A. bombers into Britain without any quid pro quo. The last three years are enough.

Today the trade unions of this country are faced by the consequences of a disastrous policy which was never properly examined: and amongst these consequences is the challenge to the democratic decisions of Scarborough, by no other than the leader who led us all to defeat at the General Election fourteen months ago. Let us examine therefore, the quick-change-artist policies of these years.

The first policy was based upon the theory that Britain should possess nuclear weapons in order to preserve its power and influence in the world. This was vehemently expressed at the 1957 Brighton Conference. The parliamentary chiefs of the Shadow Cabinet (in the shadow of the 1955 defeat they had brought on the Labour Movement by their policy) were all for Britain having nuclear weapons. Anyone of them could be quoted. But those who had lived in the company of the upper-class Admirals and Field-Marshals were particularly outspoken. A former Minister of War, John Strachey, said that

> unilateral action ... would be to make Britain the wholly dependent satellite of the United States.... It would make a future Labour Foreign Secretary unable even to consider policies which were not approved by the State Department in Washington.
>
> (*Labour Party Annual Conference Report*, October 3, 1957.)

The policy for which they won acceptance at Brighton† by 5,836,000 votes to 781,000 was not only illogical. It was also highly danger-

*Mr. Scott, as many of our readers will know, is a National Officer of the Electrical Trades Union, and led that union's delegation at the Labour Party Conference in Scarborough.

†It was at this Conference that Aneurin Bevan, no longer leading the Left, had made his much-quoted appeal to the delegates not to send 'a British Foreign Secretary, whoever he may be, naked into the Conference Chamber' without the H-bomb.

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ous; since by the same reasoning, other countries would also strive to possess nuclear arms, thus making more difficult the task of securing agreement to ban these terrible weapons.

The next year at Scarborough found Gaitskell arguing for a free hand, when he wound up the debate about the then latest defence statement, which he regarded 'as an outstanding policy for foreign affairs for the future Labour Government':

> The truth is that it is impossible to lay down the details of defence policy and what you should do in matters of this kind in opposition.... Firstly, because a great many of these things are secret.... Secondly, because you cannot really determine your defence policy in isolation. You have to have your discussions with the United States.

On unilateral disarmament he said:

> If we do this on our own and we remain in the NATO alliance, all we are doing is to shelter behind the American bombs.
>
> (*Labour Party Annual Conference Report*, October 2, 1958.)

After that he argued against a resolution (defeated by 5,538,000 votes to 1,005,000), which proposed a non-nuclear club, that it would be ineffective.

Yet six months later that 'outstanding policy' was already out, and he was sponsoring, as the next abortive policy, that highly publicised Non-Nuclear Club, under which Britain would renounce these weapons if countries other than the United States and the Soviet Union would do likewise. This notorious non-starter failed to note that others such as de Gaulle also believed, with our Labour Party foreign policy experts, that nuclear weapons conferred power and independence from American policy. And de Gaulle refused to be convinced by the logic of Mr. Gaitskell's second illogical policy.

Finally came the Blue Streak fiasco, and it was found that Britain had 'an independent deterrent', but no independent means of delivering it. So, to quote the policy:

> In future the provision of the nuclear deterrent must be left to America.

Thus ends the costly failure to attempt to provide an independent deterrent, and British policy rests where it always has done: not on the foundation of Labour policy, but on that of Washington and the Pentagon. For dependence on NATO, CENTO, and SEATO means exactly that.

Let us make no mistake, this alliance is not a defence of freedom against slavery, but of international Capitalism against Communism. Some of the countries in these 'defensive' set-ups are dictatorships, or semi-authoritarian régimes, which are anything but democratic. We all know now, for example, that it was not for freedom that

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Britain intervened in a bloody civil war in Korea, in support of the infamous Syngman Rhee.

This servile attachment to U.S. foreign policy has given British Labour the cold shivers for years. Remember how a British Prime Minister had to fly to Washington in December, 1950, to prevent a United States General from dropping an atomic bomb on China, when his forces together with those of Syngman Rhee had suffered defeat after defeat in Korea. Then, in 1954 we were nearly dragged into war with Indo-China (with Nehru revealing what Dulles in his 'brinkmanship' had got ready to do), in order somehow to keep the French Army and white settlers safe in their fortress of Dien Bien Phu, from which they were ignominiously expelled. Then came the intervention of the United States Seventh Fleet at the off-shore islands of Quemoy and Matsu in 1958, and the frantic attempts to avert what could well have proved the final conflict; and now we have the latest cold war idea, the proposal to re-arm Western Germany with nuclear weapons.

All these potential disasters are a direct result of our military commitments in NATO. Like the bomb, it is not a defence: it is a dangerous delusion. It should be abolished, like all other war-like pacts, and we should repudiate the futile pretence that we can be protected if only we 'reform' it, and gain more control over it.

It seems that Labour's foreign policy has consisted of polite attempts merely to prevent the U.S.A., our patron and ally, from involving us in suicidal international adventures. It is time for a change. It is widely accepted that in the event of nuclear war, Britain, with its closely packed millions, will be the most vulnerable country in the world and probably the first casualty. Our future depends on how Labour acts today. The Labour Party must speak, and act, overwhelmingly for Britain's people: for international understanding and peace: for humanity to have a future.

The problems of trade unionism in the sixties are indeed important: and the *Labour Monthly* has done a good job in bringing them up for discussion. But to my mind the most crucial of all our problems is how the trade unions can work out a policy of world peace. Of first importance is to be rid of the Polaris and other bases.

It was from this standpoint that my organisation, the Electrical Trades Union, put down for discussion by the Labour Party at Scarborough a resolution which declared:

> This Conference is of the opinion that the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons and the existence of foreign military bases in Britain endanger the safety and security of the British people. It believes that

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the continuance of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the Eastern European Mutual Assistance Alliance (Warsaw Pact) prevent the peaceful settlement of outstanding differences and agreement being reached on nuclear disarmament. Conference, therefore, demands that the Government:

(*a*) Takes steps to end the manufacture and testing of nuclear weapons by all countries and particularly Great Britain;

(*b*) Removes foreign military bases from British soil; and

(*c*) withdraws from NATO and strives for the disbandment of that organisation and the Warsaw Pact.

At Scarborough the E.T.U. withdrew the resolution in favour of supporting the successful resolutions of the Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Transport and General Workers Union.

The E.T.U. is proud of the physical and financial support it gives to the Labour Party; they intend to see the Labour Party Conference's defence policy carried out, in the same spirit that they are loyal to and implement their own conference decisions.

DISCUSSION

Below are contributions on :

1. **Combine Committees**
2. **The A.E.U. and the Bomb**

1. From L.H.G. Guy:

(*Sec., British Light Steel Pressings Shop Steward Committee (Acton); Rootes Combine Committee; E.C. Member, National Union of Sheet Metal Workers and Coppersmiths.*)

IT WAS with great interest that I read the invitation to contribute to this series, and the first article 'Turning Point for Trade Unionists' by Robert Willis. One could only agree with the majority of it. But when he says: 'Today the workers' fight is not primarily for the right to work or the right to existence', does he mean that mass unemployment will never rear its ugly head again or even that the work people believe it will not? I can hardly think so; for already the motor workers, and most people employed in industries where hire purchase terms and credit restrictions operate, are more than concerned with full employment and the right to work.

At this time in the sixties, what problems face the workers as they struggle for the right to work and for higher standards? First, the one problem that has always been with them: a Tory Government. Secondly, an ineffective Labour Party leadership. Thirdly, many of the larger unions led by class collaborationists. Fourthly, the bans and proscriptions against Communists and many militants within the Labour movement.

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Last but not least, the forming of combines, mergers and monopolies by leading industrialists and property owners. This presents trade unionists with new problems calling for effective consultation and action in a combine's units; and so the rank and file have been forced into producing their own machine and leadership. It is true that full employment (up to a few months ago) and the change in industrial techniques have led to a much more widespread demand for consumer goods and holidays abroad, such as used to be only available to the old middle class. At the same time, it has forced craftsmen, semi-skilled and skilled, into a greater unity of organisation, particularly in the mass-producing industries, such as motor cars.

In these factories it is not unusual to find works committees covering all unions involved acting with their counterparts in other factories in their particular industrial group or combine: the shop stewards Combine committees. They are obviously the product of the sixties, arising in opposition to the combining and merging of their employers. But in addition they have also appeared to do a job most trade union officials at district and national level were either not prepared to do or were actively opposed to doing. In the sixties ahead many more combine committees must be developed. Stewards themselves do not see these organisations as 'take-over bids' for national executive authority, but as organisations typical of the sixties, which can be used quickly and effectively when occasion arises. An example was the Rootes Group dispute in October.

Bad leaders are afraid of strong working class organisations and see in them threats to their own inactivity. Good leaders will use the stewards' and combine committees to strengthen the labour movement and enforce its demands. This must be the prospect for the sixties. Good leaders are those seen out in front of the movement, with ideas and policies taking the working class a step forward; not so far in front that the workers cannot reach out and touch them on the shoulder, but leading and shaping the pure gold of the movement existing in the rank and file. This sort of leadership is exactly that of the stewards' and combine committees: close to the membership, feeling its pulse every day in the cut-and-thrust of factory negotiations. Full-time trade union officials worth their salt will understand this and put it to the service of the labour movement and the creation of socialism. For inevitably those who believe in the working class and are not afraid of its strength will be the new leaders of the sixties. The power of the movement developing will sweep away the Gaitskells, Carrons, Matthews and the like.

They are a product of the fifties, a product born and destined to die in this, the century of the people.

2. From 'Engineer'

THE Executive Committee of the A.E.U., in campaigning to line up the union behind Gaitskell's 'defence' policy, say they 'should have intervened more positively and not permitted the Labour Party delegation to reverse our T.U.C. support for the joint statement in view of its similarity with our own policy'. What is 'our own policy'? As spelled out in the A.E.U. resolution it is 'for an international agreement on complete disarmament, and in the meantime demands the unilateral renunciation of the testing, manufacture, stockpiling *and basing*

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of all nuclear weapons in Great Britain' (my italics). The Labour Party statement, on the other hand, calls for 'continued loyal membership of NATO' and support in future for a U.S. 'thermo-nuclear deterrent'. Now Gaitskell's acceptance of the Polaris submarine base in Holy Loch proves to all that 'loyalty to NATO' does mean basing nuclear weapons in Britain. How right the delegation at Scarborough was to vote against the Gaitskell 'Defence' statement!

But who do the E.C. think they are to talk of 'permitting' the delegation to vote as they did on the official statement? The delegation doesn't have to get a permit to vote for the policy of the union, democratically arrived at. And defeated on that, note how the E.C. leaders next resorted to pressing the delegation to abstaining from voting against the Gaitskell line. If they had got their way and the A.E.U. had abstained, the Gaitskell policy would have been carried at Scarborough (since the vote against would have been reduced from 3,339,000 to 2,666,000, with 3,042,000 for it). The result would have been the same double-think, double-face result as at Douglas! Now these same E.C. people come out publicly campaigning against their own members' delegation decision, spending time and money which could be put to better use in campaigning for better wages and conditions. And here they are ready to use press, radio and T.V. and all facilities put at their disposal by the enemies of the working class to subvert the decisions of their members. They need a short, sharp answer.

DID YOU MISS THESE?

For readers who have missed previous articles on trade union problems, in the past six months, may we draw attention to the following:

W. J. Michael (*Blacksmiths*), 'A Modern Amalgamation in Progress' (July).
W. Paynter (*Miners*), 'Crisis in Coal' (August).
J. E. Mortimer (*Draughtsmen*), 'Prospects for Shipbuilding' (August).
A. L. Horner (*Miners*), 'Coal: What Future?' (September).
Vulcan, 'Have we the Leadership we Deserve?' (September).
F. Crump (*Life Assurance Workers*), 'The Case for Nationalising Insurance' (October).
D. McLaren (*Engineering Apprentices*), 'My First Strike' (October).
F. McKenna (*Railwaymen*), 'The Great Trains Robbery' (October).
R. Willis (*London Typographical*), 'Turning Point for Trade Unionists' (November).

Others may be found by referring to the Index.

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CUBA: TWO SHORT YEARS

C. Desmond Greaves

AT the end of this month Cuban freedom will be two years old. Batista's flight took place on New Year's Day, 1959, and next morning Fidel Castro entered Santiago at the head of what was now the army of the Republic. Since then two years have brought Cuba greater changes than the preceding sixty. It is therefore of great interest to trace the causes of the revolution's extraordinary tempo.

The defeated Batista régime would have polled well as the 'world's most hated Government'. It was also one of the most unstable, resting on a narrow base of semi-feudal plantation owners, compradore capitalists, and a corrupt officialdom which included the trade union leadership. The sole reason for its existence was to protect against popular opposition a system of total economic subordination to foreign monopoly interests—a subordination surely well nigh unparalleled in any nominally sovereign state.

While the American military mission sat making policy in Havana, the monopolies glutted themselves on the produce of the people. A thousand million dollars of American investment included not only all big industry but thousands of acres of land—in an island the size of England with a population of six and a half million. So far had the balance of rural life been sacrificed to the one crop (sugar) the monopolists were most interested in, that a great part of the peasantry, completely landless, worked only during the sugar harvest and spent the rest of the year in enforced idleness and semi-starvation. Illiteracy, lack of elementary sanitation, infantile mortality, and disease went alongside rent and electricity rates which were among the highest in the world. The fact of American domination was written on the face of the country, and into every aspect of the lives of the people. The political domination (under the Platt Amendment providing for the intervention of U.S. troops) was set up in 1901, and maintained by a series of corrupted despotic puppets.

For this reason the struggle against the Batista tyranny had the character of a national-liberation struggle from the start. The régime lacked any vestige of moral authority. Its visible record damned it. Its anti-Cuban character was plain. One of the outstanding features of the revolution was therefore quite naturally its clean sweep of the Batista State apparatus. The democratic constitution of 1940 had been destroyed by Batista: the constitution of 1940 was restored. The military mission was expelled; the army

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disbanded; the police agencies dissolved; the municipal and provincial administrations dismissed; the corrupt trade union bureaucracy removed. In their place were established the institutions of the people, the Council of Ministers, the revolutionary army (including workers' militia) the National Institute for Agrarian Reform, and the two State banks. The Communist party was restored to legality, and trade union democracy re-established. The new régime had enthusiastic mass support.

The programme of the Castro Government was national independence, agrarian reform and industrialisation. On the human side this meant an improved standard of living, and vastly expanded education, health and housing services. Its centre was the agrarian reform which began in January, 1960, when powers were used to confiscate all estates of above one thousand acres.*

This measure was essential. Without it there could be no full employment in the countryside, no diversification of agriculture, no raising of living standards or expansion of the internal market. It was not discriminatory. Foreign and Cuban landowners were treated alike. Nor did it affect the bulk of foreign investment which was industrial. Nevertheless the first confiscations of American property under the reform were the signal for a crescendo of economic reprisal from the U.S.A., with military provocation.

A possible explanation of American intransigence, which cost them every dollar of their Cuban investments within nine months, is that Agrarian reform corresponds to the centuries old aspirations of the entire South American continent. This dangerous beacon must be dowsed at once, whatever the risk. One by one American-owned industries were thrown into the economic sabotage of the Cuban revolution, and one by one they were 'intervened' or nationalised outright by the revolutionary State. Such firmness on the part of the new national Government was only possible because at each stage in the struggle assistance was immediately forthcoming from countries of the socialist world, which supplied oil, machinery and equipment, accepting in return the sugar and fruit which Americans now refused to touch. The economic strength of the Socialist world, as well as its own internal vigour, preserved the Cuban revolution from one of the most thorough-going Trade Wars of modern times.

*CUBA : *Anatomy of a Revolution*, by Leo Huberman and Paul M. Sweezy (Monthly Review Press, New York, 176 pp. $3.50), is full of interesting and useful material, particularly on Fidel Castro's background and experiences and on the Movement of July Twenty Six (the day in 1953 when Castro first headed a rising). Under-estimation of the development of the Cuban working class led the authors to some mistaken conclusions.

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In the course of nine months, the entire pattern of external trade was revolutionised, but Cuba ended with greater foreign currency reserves than when she started.

American pressure, instead of slowing up the revolution, under the existing conditions, forced it to move with constant acceleration. With the realisation of defeat, came the attempt to produce a figurehead who might lead an intervention from among the mutually feuding emigres of Florida. Just as in the trade war the economic strength of world democracy was shown, so at the United Nations appeared its diplomatic strength. The U.S.A. has been compelled to disclaim any desire of military intervention, while taking its marines to and from the Guantanamo base like the brave old Duke of York. The danger is not yet over but the world peace forces have been strong enough to prevent intervention.

Attempts to isolate Cuba by badgering the members of the Organisation of American States to condemn the Castro régime, have already proved a failure, and incidentally made the attitude to Cuba the touchstone for progress throughout Latin America.

The Cuban revolution heralds the liberation of Latin America from imperialism. Internally its strength has been the alliance of workers and peasants. Externally, it has enjoyed the solidarity of world democracy, from the American progressives (and especially the Negro people) to the Soviet Union itself. What then is its present character? The Cuban Communists, who support the Castro Government unconditionally, but have no minister within it, declare:

> The present stage of the revolution is the stage of national liberation, agrarian reform, and the smashing of the fetters of colonialism and the elimination of the remnants of feudalism, a stage preceding the one in which the relations of production based on collective ownership of the means of production will be fundamentally and decisively established.
>
> Speech of Anibal Escalante at 8th National Congress of the Popular Socialist Party, August 18, 1960.

The forces which are carrying out the programme of 'national liberation and agrarian revolution' are the 'proletariat as a whole, the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and even the national bourgeoisie' despite vacillations among important sections of the last. The Communists are striving to retain the national bourgeoisie within the revolutionary camp, for the preservation of the alliance of the classes against imperialism and its agents in Cuba. According to Escalante, 'the programme today is not a socialist programme, but we, adherents of socialism, tell the masses that the logical development of the revolution leads to socialism'.

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GOLD SCARES

John Eaton

What a god's gold! . . .
To thee be worship and thy saints for aye
Be crowned with plagues, that thee alone obey!
(*Timon of Athens*)

SUDDENLY in the last weeks of October the 'gold rush' began on Tuesday the eighteenth: the price of gold in the London market soared from 250s. an ounce (the normal price corresponding to the American Treasury's fixed selling price of $35 an ounce) to over 285s. equivalent to $40. It was as if the seismograph of the capitalist world economy had suddenly begun to oscillate wildly. And speculation ran frantically through the banking parlours and stock exchanges, some hot with hopes of profit, but most shivering with cold apprehensions and wondering what it portended. In mid-November, as I write, the seismograph has steadied, with gold only slightly above the normal price; but confidences have been shaken and the incident leaves a mark that will never fully be eradicated.

Forces that neither New York, nor London, nor Bonn, nor Paris, nor Tokyo know how to control have shaken—only an inch or two perhaps—but distinctly moved at least—the marbled institutions of those great financial centres, that advertise unshakeability as their first asset. *The Banker* (November, 1960), describing the incident as a 'further manifestation of deep-seated instability in the world's mechanism for international payments', writes:

> The most disquieting aspect of the break away of the gold-price is that it is not only a consequence, but also a new cause, of distrust of the U.S. dollar.

The immediate cause of the 'break-away' was that speculators in Switzerland (at least a third of them believed to be American) decided as an insurance against their (and other people's) fears to buy gold and were ready to pay 'above the odds' for it at a time when supplies in the gold market were limited. The U.S. Treasury only sells to central banks 'for legitimate monetary purposes'. Its price of $35 an ounce normally sets the limits to the free gold market so that prices there keep within about 8 cents of the U.S. price, 8 cents being the estimated cost of transferring gold from the U.S. This October 'breakaway' was a severance between the 'free market' price in London and the bankers' price in New York which could,

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of course, have been ended if the central bankers or the U.S. authorities had allowed gold unrestrictedly to flow into the free market.

This is not the first time that the market price of gold has widely diverged from the official price. In 1949 it rose to $50 and during the Korean war to $42 but it was believed widely in capitalist circles that now a stable relation between the gold market and the official price had been established and this breakaway came as a profound shock to all who imagined that monetary relations between the currencies were now surely based and under control. The various currencies are all hitched to the dollar and through the dollar to gold at the officially prescribed price. Collapse in the dollar-gold relationship would inevitably dislocate the whole structure of currencies in the capitalist world.

The several reasons underlying the current distrust of the dollar include—changed economic relations between the great powers, the U.S.A.'s loss of economic and political prestige (U-2 incident, UN meeting, etc., etc.), speculation on Democratic policy if Kennedy wins and a general atmosphere of uneasiness due to international tension and the worsening economic situation in the U.S.A. and elsewhere. The *U.S. News and World Report,* October 31, 1960, quotes an international banker in reply to the question 'Why this sudden interest in gold?' as saying:

> Whenever people begin to fear for the value of their currencies, or other things, they think of gold. Land can be seized by Governments, but gold can be hidden. Governments can legislate all they want but they can't change people. And, right now, people are worried about many things. Where they can, people are turning in many cases to gold as a haven for their savings.

Where is this incident likely to lead? Of course, in such a situation innumerable axes are brought out to grind—an increased gold price is urged, revaluation of the D-mark, devaluation of the dollar, etc., etc. But the last thing the U.S. imperialists want is to devalue the dollar. Their problem is that, apart from trade, the U.S.A. is spending annually about $9 billion abroad, one-third approximately on private investment and the like, one-third on Government loans and grants and one-third on military expenditure. Its trade surplus covers less than two-thirds of this and the balance which in past years has been largely met by the inflow of funds into the U.S.A., is now mainly being met by the outflow of gold. Of late, because interest rates are higher elsewhere and because U.S.A. is no longer so confidently regarded as the unshakeable citadel of capitalist power, the movement of funds out of the U.S.A. has been quite rapid

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and for the first time in recent history its balance of payments situation causes alarm to U.S. imperialism. Of course, if U.S. imperialism ceased to be imperialistic, its problem would be solved overnight, but imperialism being what it is, the last thing the U.S. authorities want is a devaluation which would force them to pay more dollars to cover the cost of their interference with other peoples overseas. The Germans, on the other hand, are at this particular stage not investing or spending much abroad outside of trade but are accumulating huge reserves to the great embarrassment of everyone else and driving hell for leather to continue the rapid expansion of their exports. Consequently they are uneager to revalue the D-mark and even on the reduction of interest rates made it quite evident that they will consult their own convenience first and foremost. The British authorities still cling to the Tory shibboleth of 'absolute priority' for 'keeping sterling strong', but any realist must shiver when he contemplates the decline in the fortunes of British exports and the profound underlying weakness in the technical equipment of British industry. Temporarily the Pound is moving ahead only on the backwash of America's misfortunes. And so the tensions and unbalances remain; the threats to exchange stability creates fears for international liquidity and the gold scare though it has passed from the headlines must be read as a symptom of deep-seated difficulties.

UNITED NATIONS IN THE CONGO

A Diary of Events

*This is a continuation of the Diary commenced last month giving a history of the relations of the United Nations with the Congo.**

October 11. In Ruanda-Urundi (still under Belgian trusteeship) the Ruanda king protested against 'the enormous build-up of Belgian military forces' in the territory (D.T.).

October 16. A correspondent says gangsterism in Leopoldville is 'causing serious concern and a growing lack of confidence in Col. Mobutu's ability to protect even his nearest colleagues' (O.).

October 18. In a statement Mobutu said that he had received assurances from Tshombe of full support 'military, financial and economic. . . . There is no question of Parliament meeting. Whether the U.N. want it or the Afro-Asian bloc likes it makes no difference' (D.W.).

October 22. Belgium has rejected a demand of Mr. Hammarskjold that 'about eighteen hundred Belgian technicians still working there be recalled' (G.).

*The items of the diary are compiled under dates of newspapers, which are referred to in parentheses by the following intials: D.T. = *Daily Telegraph;* T = *The Times;* O = *The Observer;* G = *The Guardian;* D.W. = *Daily Worker;* A.P. *The Associated Press* agency; T. Mag. = *Time Magazine;* D.E. = *Daily Express;* D.H. = *Daily Herald;* Ec. = *Economist.*

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October 24. A report from U.N. confirmed that the United States had given 'private backing' to Mobutu, and commented that should the United States stick to Mobutu 'it might find itself backing a loser' (A.P.).

October 27. Mobutu, says a report, has agreed with U.N. officials to withdraw his Congolese troops from Leopoldville 'where they have been terrorising civilians in the African quarter' (G.).

October 28. The Pan African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa, at its Conference held in Uganda, has issued a 'declaration of support for Mr. Lumumba as rightful ruler of the Congo' (T.). In Leopoldville U.N. officials were concerned about 'increased Belgian "penetration" into the Congolese central and provincial administration in recent weeks . . . their number in Leopoldville had risen from 4,500 in July to 6,500' (G.). Another report said that 'Belgians in key positions in the Congo are attempting to influence local politics by creating anti-Lumumba atmosphere' (D.T.).

October 29. Mr. Yav, the Katanga 'Defence Minister' arrived in Brussels with 47 Army trainees for training in Belgium. He said Belgium 'was the only country in the world which fully understood Congolese problems' (G.).

October 30. Eight Afro-Asian states tabled a resolution calling upon the Secretary General 'to take all useful steps towards facilitating and assuring of a meeting in the shortest possible time of the Parliament of the Republic of the Congo'. It also calls for 'a decision by the Assembly to seat immediately the representatives of "the central Government" of the Congo (meaning Mr. Lumumba's Government)' (O.).

October 31. A report stated Mobutu's 'control of the Army was wavering and everywhere, it seemed, there were plotters trying to push Patrice Lumumba back into power. . . . Tshombe still depends on Belgian aid to keep his government going. Belgian engineers and money still operate the big copper mines, and Belgian advisers and experts on Tshombe's payroll virtually run the Katanga government departments and provide leadership for the army. Every government minister has a Belgian *chef de cabinet* to advise him on every move: more often than not the Belgian summons the minister when he wants him, sits while he stands' (T.Mag.).

November 3. The U.N. reports that J. M. Roberts, an Englishman aged 23, was arrested for violating a U.N. sponsored truce and 'directing reprisal massacres' in Kasai Province. He was recruited by 'a secret recruiting agency for white volunteers' with 'a Belgian colonel in charge' and was given the rank of captain. 'He said: "I did it mostly for the money (£179 a month plus £3 10s. 0d. for every day in action) but also because I did not like what Mr. Lumumba had done in the Congo".' According to the report he said that in one action at a village called Malundu: '"I burnt the village down. There were two hundred huts. . . . Our men opened all the huts and looted some"' (T. and G.).

November 4. A report was presented to the General Assembly from the U.N. Special Representative in the Congo, Mr. Rajeshwar Dayal (who was Indian High Commissioner in Pakistan). He had arrived in Leopoldville on September 6, to replace Dr. Bunche, who had been withdrawn. Dayal had submitted a preliminary progress report on Sept-

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ember 21. His next report 'to some extent supports charges which the Russians have been making against the Belgian Government' (D.T.). About Mobutu's army coup: 'The eruption of the Army into the political scene constituted a menace to peace and security and actually inhibited peaceful political activity'. He described Mobutu's Commission of University Students as 'invariably accompanied by numerous Belgian advisers' (G.). Dayal reveals that 'some Belgian nationals are believed to have been actively arming separatist Congolese forces and in some cases Belgian officers have directed and led such forces which, in certain areas, have been responsible for brutal and oppressive acts of violence' (D.E.). The 'report says "a gradual but purposeful" return is being staged by Belgian nationals' (D.H.).

November 5. A New York dispatch said that the U.S. State Department has criticised Mr. Dayal's report, being 'unable to accept the implications of bad faith on the part of the Belgians. The department's remarks seem to derive largely from uneasiness at what is regarded here as support for Mr. Lumumba by U.N. staff in the Congo' (T.).

Writing about the Afro-Asian Conciliation Group: 'It is an open secret that the U.N. has lately been more in conflict with the Colonel (Mobutu) than with Mr. Lumumba. . . . Their first imperative will be to find a way of seeing that the Congo parliament is recalled to take a decision on who is to lead the government. Even if it seems likely that Mr. Lumumba will be able to hypnotise the deputies yet again the risk must be taken' (Ec.).

November 6. A Leopoldville correspondent says: 'Congolese supporters of Mr. Lumumba are, of course, delighted that their campaign for the restoration of Parliament—which Mr. Lumumba can probably control without much difficulty—now has Mr. Dayal's support. It is believed that there can be no political settlement of the present crisis without the participation of Mr. Lumumba, who still commands considerable support in the country.' The correspondent adds: 'there are now Belgian advisers in almost every Government office in Leopoldville. Some Provincial Ministers also have Belgian councillors. . . . The United Nations alleges that these advisers are . . . encouraging the *commissaires* installed by Col. Mobutu . . . to by-pass U.N. advisers and experts . . . that the object of the Belgians is to re-establish themselves as masters of the Congo' (O.).

November 7. It was reported from New York that the U.N. 'conciliation group' has been instructed 'to try to re-establish parliamentary rule in the Congo. If this means merely re-convening the "rump Parliament" over which Mr. Lumumba has shown his mastery, it will amount to restoring him to power.' Brussels states that the Belgian Government has decided 'to reject the United Nations request for the withdrawal of technicians from the Congo' (T.).

November 8. In a report from Leopoldville, Mr. Lumumba said that 'he fully supported the U.N. report by Mr. Dayal. . . . He called on the U.N. to respect and conform to the decisions of the Congolese Parliament . . . he also expressed his "full confidence" in the U.N. and Mr. Hammarskjold'. Mr. Tshombe in Elizabethville however, 'described the U.N. report as "completely lacking in objectivity" ' (G.).

H.R.

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BOOKS

Room at the Bottom
Katherine Hood
Lawrence & Wishart, Ltd. 72pp. 3s. 6d.

THIS is a valuable book; it sets out in detail—but without dullness—the hard facts about the operation and effect of the social services; and it adds many of the valuable political lessons to be drawn from those facts, leaving to the thoughtful student the opportunity to draw many further such lessons for himself.

Among the facts which will surprise most of those who do not have to resort to the social services for themselves is the very high proportion of those who ought to be eligible for benefit under a scheme which claims to cover the whole field, but are not in fact covered; one fifth of those who ought to be drawing retirement pensions are not in fact drawing them, being disqualified for 'insufficient contribution record' or similar causes, and the proportion of those losing unemployment payment on similar grounds is nearly the double of one fifth; those who suffer are of course those who most urgently need the benefits. Another surprise is the high proportion of those actually drawing benefits who have to seek supplementary payments from the National Assistance Board, with its hateful and degrading means test; for example, about one fifth of those drawing retirement pensions are also 'on the N.A.B.'

When one turns to deeper and more long-term defects, the author brings out very well the results of the whole service being on a contributory basis. These go far beyond the fact that workers have to pay a substantial part of their weekly earnings; they alter the whole nature and basis of the scheme. In place of proclaiming the duty of the state to spend out of its vast resources whatever is needed for the maintenance of our greatest human and economic asset, the working population, contributory schemes base everything on a 'fund', notional or actual, with all its capitalist implications of solvency, of balancing a budget, of 'We can't afford'. As a result benefits are kept low, and the bogey of 'financial practicability' is allowed to prevail over true economy —just as if it was the duty of all of us to ensure always that no worker should ever for a moment even appear to be getting out of the community more than he puts in. If one takes the famous definition of Bernard Shaw that a gentleman is one who does not seek to consume more than he produces, then the workman can never for a moment cease to be a gentleman, and become a cad like the Tories who design these social service schemes to postpone the revolution, or the Labour leaders who in 1946 created the 'welfare state' on a contributory basis. Another lesson is that the somewhat better conditions applying to unemployment relief, as compared to retirement pensions, are the direct result of the struggles of the working class, and particularly those of the National Unemployed Workers' Movement, to which the nation owes a great debt of gratitude. It is interesting to recall that the mere approach of the Hunger Marchers to London in 1934 scared the Government so badly that they arrested and prosecuted Tom Mann and Harry Pollitt on charges of sedition, simply in order to make it impossible for them to get to London to welcome the marchers; result,

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a humiliating defeat for the Government when Mann was acquitted at Swansea Assizes, and the case against Pollitt was thereupon withdrawn!

The great central lesson to be drawn, of course, is that only under Socialism can we get satisfactory social services; and yet, of course, under capitalism, what we have in fact got is so much better than nothing that we could not dream of scrapping it. The 'Beveridge Plan', when brought forward in the later stages of the war, with all its defects, was good enough to be so unwelcome to the Tories that Arthur Greenwood was rewarded for his persistence in forcing it into actual politics by being kicked out of the War Cabinet!

D. N. PRITT.

Sowing: An Autobiography of the Years 1880-1904
Leonard Woolf
Hogarth Press. 206 pp. 21s.

In this first volume of autobiography Leonard Woolf tells the story of his childhood and youth in an England that was beginning—but still only beginning—to sow the imperialist wind that we might reap the nuclear whirlwind.

Born of a bourgeois family, the son of a wealthy barrister who carelessly left his widow and children in 'comparative poverty', Mr. Woolf ventures the opinion that 'money is not nearly as important as we are inclined to believe'. Perhaps not, if we have sensible tastes and just enough to supply them. Mrs. Woolf, though in reduced circumstances, 'had a little capital' and by economy was able to educate her children and start them in life. If they had gone really short, the author might have been less cocksure.

He was a clever boy, won scholarships, and early on shed the Jewish faith of his parents and became a rebel after his fashion. 'I have', he says, 'an instinctive dislike of all gods and Gods, kings, queens and princes'. So far so good! Unfortunately rebellion with Woolf seems never to have been more than a parlour game—a matter to be talked over at tea-tables with his friends in Cambridge or Bloomsbury. Thus, while seeing the capitalist Establishment for what it is, he recoils from anyone who fights it. To fight it, according to Woolf, is merely 'to sublimate' your 'private grudges and hatreds, the torture of real or imaginary inferiorities, in the public or oecumenical grudges and hatreds of the Communist Party'. Marx and the Russians have merely created an 'international political lunatic asylum . . . in which intelligent people can, in the name of humanity, satisfy animosities and

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salve their consciences'. Incidentally, the 'international political lunatic asylum' tore the guts out of Hitler's army, has sent a rocket to the moon and is training more scientists than the whole capitalist world combined. But the Woolfs of this world care for none of these things.

The plain fact is that while Mr. Woolf *talked* Socialism, certain other people set out to *build* it. It was the same thing, on a far smaller scale, in the French bourgeois revolution. The Girondins—the Woolfs of that age—talked; the Jacobins acted and saved France. That is the answer to the dilettante Woolfs who smugly lump together 'communism and national socialism and fascism, Hitler and Mussolini and Stalin', as if they were all one thing. They are *not* one thing, any more than a policeman frog-marching a tough is the same as a tough coshing a policeman, or Hiroshima the same as the Aldermaston March.

Only an indifference to what happens to mankind, so long as he can have his little day talking armchair philosophy with Bloomsbury intellectuals, can account for such phenomena as Mr. Leonard Woolf.

ARCHIBALD ROBERTSON.

The Garnet Bracelet and Other Stories
Alexander Kuprin
380pp. 7s. 6d.

The Simpleton
A. Pisemsky
224pp. 4s. 6d.

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A. Upits
364pp. 6s.

It Happened in Penkovo
S. Antonov
210pp. 4s. 6d.

All four from *Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow*

Central Books, London, W.C.1

THE first two are attractive new editions of two classics of Russian literature. Kuprin's stories are varied, but all give a clear picture of pre-revolutionary Russia. 'Moloch' in particular, the story of the visit of a member of the Board of Directors to a small town steelworks, of rioting at the works, and of the people involved, is a fine, compact example of Kuprin's style. *The Simpleton,* full of wry humour, tells the story of Pavel Beshmetev—'No manners, you know, none of that tact other young men have, no clever serious conversation. . . .' In spite of these handicaps, Pavel comes out second in his University finals, and woos and wins the belle of the town. Pisemsky uses all his literary skill in this description of the life of mid-nineteenth century provincial Russian gentry, and the book glows with vivid characterisation and humour. The books have been well translated, the first by Stepan Apresyan, the second by Ivy Litvinova.

The third is a satirical novel from the Soviet Union, *It Happened in Penkovo.* Penkovo is the centre of

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the 'Red Wave' Collective Farm—not a very big farm, not very efficient, but full of real people. The story, translated by Olga Shartse, tells of the effect of the arrival of Tonya, the new young zootechnician, and her efforts to improve life on 'Red Wave'. It is full of the nicest sort of sly humour, and makes you feel that this is a story of things as they really happen, and that among the great multi-millionaire collective farms of which we hear so much praise, there must be a few 'Red Waves'.

At the same time, Central Books are issuing a handy volume of the short stories of A. Upits, *Outside Paradise and Other Stories,* which have been translated from the Lettish by T. Zalite. The volume contains a mixture of stories of Latvia, and of flights of fancy about the expulsion from the Garden of Eden and other religious subjects.

JUNE MOSS.

BOOKS REVIEWED

Author or Editor	Title (and Reviewer)	Page
Antonov, S.	**It Happened in Penkovo** (June Moss)	571
Aptheker, Herbert	**On The Nature of Freedom** (A. Kettle)	429
Bell, Robert	**By Road to Moscow and Yalta** (E. Heath)	48
Boffa, Guiseppe	**Inside the Khrushchov Era** (Judith Todd)	521
Brittain, Sir Herbert	**The British Budgetary System** (James Harvey)	47
Brockway, Fenner	**Africa's Year of Destiny** (V.P.)	383
Buck, Tim	**Our Fight for Canada** (W. Gallacher)	187
Bullock, Alan	**The Life and Times of Ernest Bevin** (J. R. Campbell) ...	184
Clark, M.	**Meeting Soviet Man** (Archibald Robertson)	287
Cornforth, Maurice	**Philosophy for Socialists** (Clemens Dutt)	96
Cox, Idris	**Empire Today** (D. N. Pritt, Q.C.)	382
Dobb, Maurice	**An Essay on Economic Growth and Planning** (R. Bellamy)	429
Dzelepy, E. N.	**Le Mythe Adenauer** (Ivor Montagu)	46
Eden, Sir Anthony	**The Memoirs of Sir Anthony Eden** (R. P. Dutt)	135
Eisenstein, Sergei	**Notes of a Film Director** (S. Cole)	189
Engels, Frederick	**Correspondence of Frederick Engels with Paul and Laura Lafargue** (S. G. Hutchins)	95
Entertainment Workers' Trade Unions	**Entertainment in the Soviet Union: An Official Report** (Harry Francis)	237
Fyrth, H. J., and Collins, H.	**The Foundry Workers** (T. Ainley)	238
Grekov, B. L.	**Kiev Rus** (Robert Browning)	334
Halle, Louis J.	**American Foreign Policy** (Colin Sweet)	431
Hood, Katherine	**Room at the Bottom** (D. N. Pritt, Q.C.)	569
Hunt, Sir John, and Brasher, Christopher	**The Red Snows** (Olive Arnot)	431
Kane, Jock	**Spotlight on Coal** (Guy Stobbs)	190
Kuprin, Alexander	**A Garnet Bracelet** (June Moss)	571
Lewis, John	**Science, Faith and Scepticism** (Clemens Dutt)	96
Marx, Karl, and Engels, F. ...	**The First Indian War of Independence** (Clemens Dutt) ...	239
Perelman, V.	**Astronomy for Entertainment** (W. A. Granger, F.R.A.S.)	191
Pisemsky, A.	**The Simpleton** (June Moss)	571
Rabinovich, D.	**Dmitri Shostakovich** (Alan Bush)	236
Richardson, J. Henry	**Economic and Financial Aspects of Social Security: An International Survey** (Katherine Hood)	430
Robertson, Archibald	**Socialism and Religion** (Bob Stewart)	190
Royal Institute of Public Administration	**Budgeting in Public Authorities** (James Harvey)	47
Rudé, George	**The Crowd in the French Revolution** (Archibald Robertson)	142
Simon, Brian	**Studies in The History of Education** (G. C. T. Giles) ...	333
	Freedom (Arnold Kettle)	429
Tikhomirov, M.	**The Towns of Ancient Rus** (Robert Browning)	519
Thompson, E. P.	**Out of Apathy** (D. Nandy)	479
Upits, A	**Outside Paradise** (June Moss)	571
Vitkovich, Victor	**Kirghizia Today** (Nowell Hewlett Johnson)	520
Winnington, Alan	**Slaves of the Cool Mountain** (J. Eaton)	94
Woolf, Leonard	**Sowing: An Autobiography** (Archibald Robertson) ...	570
Yermilov, V.	**F. Dostoyevsky** (Archibald Robertson)	335

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Index to Volume XLII

1—AUTHORS

*(R) stands for Review throughout.

		Page
A.E.U. DELEGATE	Rules Revision	331
AFRO-ASIAN PEOPLE'S SOLIDARITY CONFERENCE	Conakry Declaration	285
AINLEY, T.	The Foundry Workers (R)	238
APTHEKER, H.	The United States Today	34
	The U.S. Elections	453
ARNISON, J.	Peace In My Time	166
ARNOT, OLIVE	The Red Snows (R)	431
ARNOT, R. PAGE	Africa in 1960	23
	Central Africa: Prison-House	69
ATKINSON, JUDY	Students' Action	281
BELCHER, P.	Benefits of Disarmament, II	222
BELLAMY, R.	An Essay on Economic Growth and Planning (R)	429
BERGER, J.	Know Your Salesman	48
	The Whole Zoo	518
BERLIOZ, J.	Crisis of Socialism?	84
BOLTON, G.	A Miner's View	172
BOWMAN, D.	The Railway Warning Signal	118
BRECHT, BERTOLT	If Sharks Were Human	179
BRIGINSHAW, R. W.	Benefits of Disarmament, I	221
	The Press Jungle	543
BROADBRIDGE, S. R.	Campaigners—Unite!	224
	A New Approach to Peace	426
BROWNING, R.	Kiev Rus (R)	334
	The Towns of Ancient Rus (R)	519
BUSH, A.	Dmitri Shostakovich (R)	236
CAMPBELL, J. R.	The History of Ernie Bevin, Labour Leader	184
CASASOLA, R.	A Reminder of Scarborough, 1954	469
COLE, S.	Notes of a Film Director (R)	189
COOK, D.	The Siege of St. Pancras	475
COX, I.	Africa's Wind of Change	123
CROOK, D.	Ten Years in Ten Mile Inn	42, 88
CRUMP, F.	Nationalisation of Insurance	460
DELAHOY, J.	Looking for Jobs	473
DUTT, CLEMENS	Philosophy For Socialists (R)	96
	Science, Faith and Scepticism (R)	96
	The First Indian War of Independence (R)	239
DUTT, R. PALME	Notes of the Month: What Is Socialism?	1
	Notes of the Month: Disarmament and Peace	49
	Notes of the Month: Red Friday and After	97
	Notes of the Month: Lenin After 90 Years	145
	Notes of the Month: Black and White	193
	Notes of the Month: Summit and After	241
	Notes of the Month: Nuclear Strategy and Nuclear Disarmament	251
	Notes of the Month: After Paris—What Next?	289
	Notes of the Month: Congo, Cuba and Peace	385
	Notes of the Month: Battle of Scarborough	433
	Notes of the Month: Think Fast! Act Fast!	481
	Notes of the Month: Parliament and Democracy	488
	Notes of the Month: Economic Storm Clouds	529
	Notes of the Month: Trade Unions and Politics	536
	Sir Anthony in the Cupboard (R)	135
	Harry Pollitt (1890-1960)	357
EATON, J.	Slaves of the Cool Mountain (R)	94
	Failure of 'Mixed Economy', I and II	174, 229
	Gold Scares	564
'ENGINEER'	A.E.U. and the Bomb	559
'ENID'	Remember	382
FOULKES, FRANK	A Tribute to the Apprentices	381
FRANCIS, H.	Entertainment in the Soviet Union (R)	237
GALLACHER, W.	Our Fight for Canada (R)	187
	Cuba and The Crazy Gang	365
GARDNER, J.	For a World Without War	368
GARDNER, W. H.	Paying for Roads and Rails	173
GASCOYNE, A. M.	Hiroshima Day in Yorkshire	425
GILES, G. C. T.	Studies In The History of Education (R)	333
GRAHAM, SHIRLEY	I'll Have A Cup of Coffee	322
GRANGER, W. A., F.R.A.S.	Astronomy for Entertainment (R)	191
GREAVES, C. D.	Cuba: Two Short Years	561
GRIMSHAW, P.	The Left Must Fight	76
GUINAN, M.	The Industrial Vanguard	114
GUY, L. H. G.	Combine Committees	558
HANNAFORD, N.	A Pioneer Marxist Historian	478

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

HARDY, G.	Strike for the Pensioners!	422
	Seamen's Struggles	464
HARVEY, J.	The British Budgetary System (R)	47
HEATH, EILEEN	By Road to Moscow and Yalta (R)	48
HOLLAND, B.	Smash The Bans!	116
HOOD, KATHERINE	Economic and Financial Aspects of Social Security: An International Survey (R)	430
	The Rent Racket	511
HORNER, A.	Coal: What Future?	397
HURWORTH, L.	Railwaymen and Common Ownership	78
HUTCHINS, S. G.	Correspondence of Frederick Engels (R)	95
JOHNSON, NOWELL HEWLETT	Kirghizia Today (R)	520
JOYE, P.	A Belgian View of Congo	401
KAJI, WATARU	The Sea of Anger	371
KELLEY, DICK, M.P.	Antidote For Defeatism	500
KETTLE, A.	Freedom (R)	429
	On The Nature of Freedom (R)	429
KHRUSHCHOV, NIKITA	How Communism Ends Colonialism	503
KRUPSKAYA, N.	More Memories of Lenin	271
LUKER, A. H.	A New Town	278
MICHAEL, W. J.	A Modern Amalgamation in Process	328
MITCHELL, J.	Tory Gimmicks	31
MONTAGU, I.	Le Mythe Adenauer (R)	46
	Racists and Militarists	81
	Naked in The Conference Chamber	159
MOORE, W.	A Town Condemned	233
MORTIMER, J. E.	Prospects For Shipbuilding	373
	The Case Against Nuclear Weapons	449
MOSS, JUNE	A Garnet Bracelet, etc. (R)	571
McDONALD, A.	Mixed? It's their Politics	235
McGAHEY, M.	The Vote at 18	379
McKENNA, F.	The Great Trains Robbery	471
McLAREN, D.	My First Strike	467
NANDY, DIPAK	Out of Apathy (R)	479
OLIPHANT, P. G.	Forty Years Ago	279
O'SHEA, EIBLIS	It's Our Future	226
PAYNTER, W.	Crisis in Coal	347
PRITT, D. N.	What's this about Korea?	262
	What's this about Berlin?	305
	Empire Today (R)	382
	Room at the Bottom (R)	569
V.P.	Africa's Year of Destiny (R)	383
QUÆSTOR	Disarmament and Its Enemies	107
	Zig-Zags and Skirmishes	211
	Pentagon Wrecks The Summit	311
	Who Blocks Disarmament?	546
RAMELSON, B.	Forbid the Bans!	206
RATHBONE, H.	United Nations in the Congo	524, 566
ROBERTSON, A.	The Crowd in the French Revolution (R)	142
	Meeting Soviet Man (R)	287
	F. Dostoyevsky (R)	335
	Sowing (R)	570
ROTHSTEIN, A.	Historic Issues Facing Labour (Notes of the Month)	337
RUSSELL, T.	Rutland Boughton (1878-1960)	126
H.G.S.	Canadian Memories	283
SCHAFFER, G.	Appeasing Adenauer	39
	Polaris and Consent	551
SCOTT, G.	NATO Prevents Peace	555
SCOTT, J. R.	The Salt of the Earth	17
	Wanted: A Campaign	111
SHAW, G. B.	Advice To Advertisers	192
SHEPPARD, BILL	Railwaymen in Conference	428
STEELE, ANNA	Why We Are Marching	163
STEWART, BOB	Socialism And Religion (R)	190
	Forty Splendid Years	414
STOBBS, G.	Spotlight on Coal (R)	190
SWEET, C.	American Foreign Policy (R)	431
THOMAS, L.	Mismanaging The Economy	410
THOMSON, G.	Casement, Ireland and Africa	470, 522
TODD, JUDITH	Inside The Khrushchov Era (R)	521
TUCKETT, ANGELA	Hands Off Congo!	352
	Readers' News and Fund	*(see inside covers)*
VULCAN	The General Council and The Shop Stewards	64
	Men of Metal On The Move	259
	Have We The Leadership We Deserve?	404
VANCOUVER SUN	Sam, You've Changed	427
WAINWRIGHT, W.	Labour's Nuclear Policy	301
WALLACE-JOHNSON, I. T. A.	Holding Fast to the Rope	516
WALTERS, P. C.	A Calculated Risk	171
WATEN, J.	Socialist Realism in Australian Literature	418
WILLIS, R.	A Turning Point for Trade Unionists	495

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WINNINGTON, A.	Need India and China Quarrel?	129
WRIGHT, R. W.	Sedatives or Socialism?	169
ZAIDMAN, L.	Take-over Bid in Israel	181

II—SUBJECTS

		Page
AFRICA	Africa in 1960 (with map)	23
	Central Africa: Prison-House	69
	Africa's Wind of Change	123
	Black and White	193
	Declaration of Conakry Conference, April 16, 1960 ...	285
	Hands Off Congo!	352
	Congo, Cuba and Peace	385
	A Belgian View of Congo	401
	Holding Fast To The Rope	516
	United Nations in the Congo; A Diary of Events ...	524, 566
CHINA	Ten Years in Ten Mile Inn	42, 88
COMMUNIST PARTY	Forty Splendid Years	414
CUBA	Cuba and the Crazy Gang	365
	Congo, Cuba and Peace	385
	Cuba: Two Short Years	561
ECONOMIC SITUATION	A Calculated Risk	171
	Failure of 'Mixed Economy'	175, 229
	Mixed? It's their Politics	235
	Mismanaging the Economy	410
	Economic Storm Clouds	529
	Gold Scares	564
ENGINEERING	Wanted: a Campaign	111
	Men of Metal on the Move	259
	Rules Revision	331
	A Tribute to the Apprentices	381
FABLES	Know Your Salesman	48
	If Sharks were Human	179
	The Whole Zoo	518
GERMANY	Appeasing Adenauer	39
	What's This About Berlin?	305
ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAPS	24, 72, 120, 128, 147, 216, 264, 311, 357, 408, 456, 504, 552	
INSURANCE	Nationalisation of Insurance	460
IRELAND	Casement, Ireland and Africa	470, 522
ISRAEL	'Take-Over Bid' for Israel	181
KOREA	What's This About Korea?	263
LABOUR AND TRADE UNION MOVEMENT	What is Socialism?	1
	The Salt of the Earth	17
	Tory Gimmicks	31
	The General Council and the Shop Stewards	64
	The Left Must Fight	76
	Crisis of Socialism?	84
	Red Friday and After	97
	The Industrial Vanguard	114
	Smash the Bans!	116
	Communication	133
	Sedatives or Socialism?	169
	The History of Ernie Bevin, Labour Leader (R)	184
	Forbid the Banns!	206
	A Modern Amalgamation in Progress	328
	Historic Issues Facing Labour	337
	A Boilermaker's Letter	362
	Have we the Leadership we Deserve?	404
	Battle of Scarborough	433
	Socialism and Clause 4	443
	Labour Party and *Labour Monthly*: A Misconception Corrected	447
	Nationalisation of Insurance	460
	A Reminder of Scarborough, 1954	469
	Think Fast! Act Fast!	481
	Parliament and Democracy	488
	Turning Point for Trade Unionists	495
	Antidote for Defeatism	500
	Trade Unions and Politics	536
	NATO Prevents Peace	555
	Combine Committees	558
	A.E.U. and the Bomb	559
MARXISM-LENINISM	Lenin after 90 Years	145
MINING	A Miner's View	172
	A Town Condemned	233
	Crisis in Coal	347
	Remember	382
	Coal: What Future?	397

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ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

MORRIS, WILLIAM	William Morris on Solidarity	407
OBITUARIES	Rutland Boughton	126
	Alwyn Machen	180
	Douglas Goldring	210
	Harry Pollitt	357
	Ernest Brown	378
	Aneurin Bevan	380
	Monica Whately	448
OLD AGE PENSIONS	Strike For the Pensioners!	422
PRESS	The Press Jungle	543
RAILWAYS	Railwaymen and Common Ownership	78
	The Railway Warning Signal	118
	Paying for Roads and Rails	173
	Railwaymen in Conference: A Delegate's View	428
	The Great Trains Robbery	471
RENTS	The Siege of St. Pancras	475
	The Rent Racket	511
SHIPBUILDING	Prospects for Shipbuilding	373
SHIPPING	Seamen's Struggles	464
TERCENTENARY	A Black Tercentenary	258
TIBET	Need India and China Quarrel? (with map)	129
TORYISM	Sir Anthony in The Tory Cupboard (R)	135
TOWN PLANNING	A New Town	277
TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO		16, 63, 117, 168, 205, 288, 321, 346, 413, 446
U.S.A.	The United States Today	34
	I'll Have a Cup of Coffee	322
	Sam You've Changed	427
	The U.S. Elections	453
U.S.S.R.	Forty Years Ago	279
	How Communism Ends Colonialism	503
VIEWS OF THE WORLD		171, 233, 279, 331, 381, 425, 469, 522
WAR OR PEACE	Disarmament & Peace	49
	Racists and Militarists	81
	Disarmament And Its Enemies	107
	'Naked in the Conference Chamber'	159
	Why We Are Marching	163
	Peace In My Time	166
	Zig-Zags and Skirmishes	211
	Benefits of Disarmament, I and II	221, 222
	Campaigners—Unite!	224
	It's Our Future	226
	Summit and After	241
	Nuclear Strategy and Nuclear Disarmament	251
	After Paris—What Next?	289
	Labour's Nuclear Policy	301
	Pentagon Wrecks the Summit	311
	For a World Without War	368
	The Sea of Anger	371
	Congo, Cuba and Peace	383
	Hiroshima Day in Yorkshire	425
	A New Approach to Peace	426
	Nuclear Disarmament	438
	The Case Against Nuclear Weapons	449
	Who Blocks Disarmament?	546
	Polaris and Consent	551
	NATO Prevents Peace	555
WORKING CLASS HISTORY	More Memories of Lenin	271
	Engels on Robert Owen	276
	A Pioneer Marxist Historian	478
WORKING CLASS LITERATURE	Socialist Realism in Australian Literature	418
YOUTH	Student's Action	281
	The Vote at 18	379
	A Tribute to the Apprentices	381
	My First Strike	467
	Looking for Jobs	473

SETTLED OUT OF COURT

Should any member after the decision of a committee and a general meeting on his case, appeal to a court of law for redress, he shall be expelled this Society, and forfeit all interest he has in the Society's funds.

From the *Rules of the Glasgow Tin Plate Workers*, 1860.

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(Continued from page ii of cover)

in turn. I was fortunate to get the enclosed September copy back before it had travelled very far'. Where this means that a reader intending to return his loose copies for binding is short, we will of course credit him with that copy. And please tell us soon about your orders for binding this 1960 volume; details on back cover.

One of the best ways of being certain of not missing any in this series is to take out a postal subscription; for yourself, your branch secretary, for a friend. Note the enclosed order for the L.M. Gift Subscription; we will also forward any message to your friend which you send with your remittance. From then on a copy of L.M. will drop through the letter box on or before the first of each month. I hope, too, that more will follow the example of the reader who attends a Miners' Day Release school 'where I have four readers in my class, three of them Labour councillors'.

Greetings to all readers from the Japanese veteran poet, Wataru Kaji, who wrote so movingly about the June anti-Bomb demonstrations which he took part in, in the August L.M. Now he writes: 'It is a great honour for me, if my poem can convey to your fellow-countrymen how our people feel in endeavouring to avoid war. I send a warm greeting to all you fighting for our common cause—peace'.

Next month we must come back to the question of the fund; obviously there is so much that must be done now things are moving so fast. Circulation and support must move fast too. And you don't celebrate a unique birthday like our 40th without it, either. We will return to that subject after December 31. But meanwhile, when you are making up your list of presents in the next weeks, don't forget to put a bit aside for a New Year's greeting to your very old and faithful friend, LABOUR MONTHLY. October's total was:

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